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Folks

LITTLE FOLKS:

A Magazine for the Young.

NEW AND ENLARGED SERIES.

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CASSELL & COMPANY, LIMITED, LITH LONDON

GRANNY'S STORY.

LITTLE FOLKS.

MUNGO.

FOUR ON AN ISLAND.

By L. T. MEADE, *Author of "A World of Girls," "Polly: a New-Fashioned Girl," &c. &c.*

CHAPTER I.—THE BEGINNING OF THE ADVENTURES.

NO one quite knows when adventures may begin. It is possible to wake in the morning, and think of the usual sort of things going on all day long: of breakfast and dinner and supper, and snug bed at night, and all the pleasant shelter of home; it is possible to think of these things, and to imagine they will go on for ever, and yet to find oneself in the evening in a totally different situation, everything changed, breakfast, dinner, and supper not to be had, no cosy bed to curl into, no "good-nights" to be said, no home anywhere.

This is just what happened to the four little people about whom this story tells. They woke in the morning as usual, and as the day was very fine, the sky cloudless, and life at home just a wee bit dull, they did that thing which landed them in the queerest, most out-of-the-way sort of world it is possible to imagine.

There were four children: their names were Ferdinand, Isabel, Rachel, and Tony. Ferdinand was fourteen, Isabel between twelve and thirteen, Rachel eleven, and Tony nine. They were not all brothers and sisters. Ferdinand and Isabel were Rachel's and Tony's cousins, but it so happened that the four were all living together just now in the pleasant farmhouse owned by Mr. Fraser, Isabel's and Ferdinand's father.

This farm-house was not on English ground. It was far away, in beautiful tropical Brazil, and it was not a farm in the sense that an English homestead is a farm. Still, Mr. Fraser, who was an Englishman, and had only come to Brazil two years before, liked to speak of his wooden house, with its wide balconies and verandahs, by the old-fashioned English word; for although he was obliged to live in Brazil, he was English himself to the backbone, and liked to keep up all the names and customs of his native land as far as possible.

Tony and Rachel were also English born, but their father and mother were living up the country at present; and as Mr. Fraser's farm was situated not far from the sea-coast, it was thought a more healthy place for the children, and so the cousins were spending this bright spring-time together.

Ferdinand and Isabel had no mother living, and just a week before this story opens Mr. Fraser had been suddenly sent for on important business some distance away. The four children were therefore alone, for the black servants really had no authority over them. Ferdinand, however, was a careful steady sort of boy for his age, and Isabel was a perfect little rock of sense and wisdom. The two little Murrays, the names of the younger children, were always guided completely by their older cousins, and when Mr. Fraser went away he felt no anxiety about the little folk. He might be absent for a month or six

weeks, or he might come back any day. Whatever happened, life at the farm would go on much as usual, and all the children's wants would be attended to by the black servants, who simply swarmed all over the place.

The time of year was the middle of August, but the weather, tempered by a fresh sea-breeze, was not unpleasantly hot. The four children met as usual at breakfast, and ate with considerable appetite their English porridge and milk. Of course they could have had any amount of rich fruits and spiced dishes, but Mr. Fraser insisted as far as possible on their being brought up in English fashion. He grew his own oats and ground his own meal, so the children morning after morning ate their English porridge and milk with appetite.

They were sitting in a large cool room, which opened out on all sides into spacious green-painted verandahs. Their favourite little English terrier, Mungo, sat at Ferdinand's feet. They had brought him over from the old country, and he was a great darling with all the children.

Mungo was a very wise, entertaining little dog. His coat was dark pepper and salt, his nose smutty and slightly turned up, his tail was a mere pretence of a waggler, and his eyes were of the deepest and the softest brown.

Mungo had learnt several tricks from Ferdinand; he loved him best of the four children, and always thought of him as his rightful master. To-day Mungo's eyes looked wistful and pleading.

"I know what you're after, old man," said Ferdinand. "You want the sea, and your bath. Look at him, Bell—do look! He's actually pricking up his ears; he knows what I say as well as possible."

"It would be rather nice to go to the sea this morning," said Rachel, yawning. "It's so hot at the farm, and there never seems to be anything fresh to do. Now, about this time in England we'd have holidays, and no end of jolly fun."

"Oh, don't begin about England," said Isabel. "You know, Rachel, that we can't go back there until our father becomes rich again, and your father and mother make a fortune, so where is the use of always grumbling about this country, and making horrid comparisons. We've got to stay here, and we had better make the best of it."

"We need not quarrel about it, anyhow," said Ferdinand. He walked across the room, and entered the verandah which faced the sea. "Why shouldn't we humour poor old Mungo?" he said. "And why shouldn't we make believe that we are back in England? It's a lovely day, and there's a jolly breeze rippling all those little waves out there. Let's pack up a picnic basket, and go down to the shore. If the sun is too hot we can take shelter in the cave round Miser's Point. What do you say, girls? What do you say, Tony? Shall we go and have a really jolly English picnic?"

"Agreed!" they all exclaimed.

"I'll take my knitting with me," said Isabel. "I must have those stockings ready for father against he comes back."

"Great yarn stockings!" exclaimed Rachel. "I can't imagine how Uncle Michael can wear them."

"But they are English," said Bell. "Grandmother sent both the yarn and the pins out to us from the old country: that is why father likes them so much."

"We won't waste any more time now," said Ferdinand. "You can give us all your memories of England, Bell, when we are comfortably seated in the cove beyond Miser's Point. If we stay here chatting the sun will be too hot for us to go. Now let's get the food together, and be off."

This was quickly done, and half-an-hour afterwards the four children were seen leaving the house together. One or two of the servants saw them go, but they did not trouble their heads to ask any questions. By-and-by, when dinner-time arrived, and the little folk did not re-appear, one of the cooks made a remark. She had filled a large basket with all kinds of food for the children, and she supposed that "young massas and misseys" were off somewhere for a day's pleasure.

It was not in the easy nature of the black servants to worry themselves, and dark night arrived before it occurred to anyone to wonder where the children had gone.

So this was how the four started on their

adventures. They fully expected to be home again before night; but then, people can never tell beforehand how adventures will begin or end.

The basket which Rachel had got the cook to pack was very heavy, for it contained a good-sized fruit pie, two roast fowls, a little jar of pickles, another little tiny canister of pepper and salt, some curious kind of Brazilian cakes, which are served up at every meal, and are thought an excellent substitute for wheaten bread, and a good quantity of bananas, grapes, limes, and other fruits.

It is hard work carrying a heavy basket in the hot climate of Brazil, and as Rachel and Tony were too young to attempt the task, it fell to the share of the elder brother and sister, who soon began to wish themselves safe home again. Isabel wore a large coarse linen apron over her gaily-striped cotton dress, and on her head she had a big hat, made also of a sort of linen. This hat flapped a good deal in the breeze, but it was very cool and shady. Isabel had deep pockets in her linen apron, which held not only her knitting, but a little leather work-case, and one or two spools of black and white cotton. She had also stuffed into one of these great pockets a piece of the gay-striped cotton of which her dress was made, for Isabel was a neat little housewife, and had all the active sturdy ideas of her English father. She had no intention of wasting the summer day in dreamy idleness, and it occurred to her that she might weary of her knitting, and might find a pleasant change in cutting out and beginning to make another large apron out of the gay-striped calico.

Rachel also wore an apron with large pockets, and a shady hat like her cousin's, but Rachel's pockets were only filled with marbles, some broken animals out of a much-prized Noah's ark, a cup-and-ball, a packet of chocolate creams, and a battered version of an old fairy-tale book. The boys wore striped flannel suits of a very cool loose make, and had on their heads big Panama hats. Of course their pockets were also filled: Tony's with rubbish, Ferdinand's with a large knife (which was a compound of many valuable carpenters' tools), a good-sized piece of cord, some string, and a folded ruler; in addition he had stowed away a box of tools in the bottom of the picnic basket, for Ferdinand was as fond of carpentering as Isabel was of sewing.

Mungo, of course, went with the children. There was a narrow path, through beautiful waving grasses and high ferns, down to the sea-shore, but the little people had to pick their steps and walk carefully, on account of the rattle-snakes and other dangerous snakes with which the place abounded.

They all reached the shore in safety, scrambled over the low rocks to their favourite cave round Miser's Point, and sat down for a short time in its grateful shelter to rest and cool themselves.

"Bell, please don't take out your knitting for a few minutes," pleaded Rachel, throwing herself down at full length in the cave, and laying her pretty dark curly head on her cousin's lap. "I wish you were lazy like me, Bell. I'd like to lie here all day, and not move, except to eat chocolates and grapes."

"We'll none of us move for a quarter of an hour," said Ferdinand, taking out his watch. "After that we'll pretend we are back in England. It's delightfully cool in this cave, and we really can forget all the heat of this country; and I have got a splendid idea about a new kind of box for Bell's work. There are some boards lying about outside, and I have drawing-paper and pencils in my pocket; I'll sit in the mouth of the cave, and make a plan, and Tony shall help me to saw up the wood."

"I can't," said Tony; "we haven't got a saw with us."

"Oh, haven't we, just? There's a small saw of father's in the bottom of the basket. I popped it in, as well as my own box of carpenter's tools. Oh yes, it's all right; we'll have a real happy English day."

"I'm afraid we won't," said Isabel. "You are forgetting the direction of the sun, Fernie. We are in the shade at present, but soon it will come round and flood the entrance of the cave, and we daren't go too far back, on account of the snakes, you know."

"I never thought of the sun," said Ferdinand. "Of course you are right, Bell: it will be on us in a couple of hours, at farthest. I wish we had

brought down our tent; we could have put it up at the mouth of the cave, and then we would have had a chance of some shade."

"As if we could have lugged that heavy tent down!" said Rachel. "Oh, do let's be happy while we may. We have two hours of coolness before us, and when the sun reaches this spot we can move on. I'm very snug, and so is Mungo. Come here, you little darling, and let me touch your cool nose."

"It's all very well to say let's be happy for two hours," said Ferdinand, "and then to think we can move on. But where are we to move to? There won't be a single sheltered place along all this side of the coast. It is not safe to go far into any of the caves, and if we try to walk any distance in the middle of the day we are sure to have sunstroke."

"The sad thing is this," said Isabel: "while we are melting and grilling with heat, and all hopes of an English picnic are quite at an end, the sun will have left those rocks at the other side of the bay, and they'll be as cool and shady as possible. I wish we had chosen to go to that side first; it would have been better to have had the morning sun than the middle day sun. I cannot think how we were so stupid as to forget that the cave beyond Miser's Point lay open to all the noon-day heat."

"What a stupid mistake we have made!" said Ferdinand. "What is to be done, Bell?"

"Oh, what a fuss! when we are all so snug and jolly," murmured Rachel. "Tony, do open that basket and give me a bunch of grapes. You can't think how fond Mungo is of grapes, and I want to teach him to balance one on the end of his nose."

Tony laughed. He was even more of a child than Rachel, for his age. He fetched a few grapes, and throwing himself on the cool sandy floor of the cave, joined his sister in a game of romps with the terrier. Ferdinand and Isabel stood together in the entrance of the cave.

To English children it scarcely seems a very serious thing to have to endure the heat of the sun for a few hours, but the cool English skies are different from the hot ones of Brazil, and Ferdinand and his sister knew well that if they stayed where they were, they would all run the risk of getting ill.

"I wish I could see one of our servants anywhere about," said Ferdinand. "I'd send him up to the house to bring a carriage down for us; but of course there is not a soul anywhere near."

"There never is round Miser's Point," said Bell; "it's about *the* most lonely part of the whole coast. Don't you remember father telling us never to come here by ourselves in the evening?"

"Yes, but there are no smugglers here now," said Ferdinand. "And of course father would not mind our coming at this hour."

"Yes, he would," said Isabel. "He often said we were never to go out in the heat of the sun. He knows the sun in this country is so dangerous. What *are* we to do, Fernie? I don't mind so much for you and me, but Rachel is not at all strong."

"I'll go and have a look round," said Ferdinand; "there may by chance be one of those Portuguese fellows somewhere in the distance whom I can shout to. You stay in the cave, Bell; I won't be long."

Ferdinand ran across the pebbly beach. It was very shining, and pleasant, and cool just now, but already the shadows caused by the giant rocks were getting less and less, and Ferdinand knew that very soon there would not be a scrap of shade to be found near Miser's Point, except in the deep corners of the dangerous caves.

Isabel watched her brother as he ran. She was a thoughtful wise girl, and as she had already spent nearly two years in Brazil, she knew how grave the danger was to which they had exposed themselves.

"I am more vexed than I can say at our having come down to this stupid hot place," she murmured. "It's all very well for Fernie and me, but what are we to do with the little ones?"

At this moment Ferdinand was seen running swiftly back to the mouth of the cave.

"I have made a discovery, Bell," he said: "a jolly discovery! We are all right now."

At the word discovery Rachel and Tony left

CAUGHT!

SUCH a famous heap we made,
Lil and I, with pail and spade;
Then we set, to guard the hill,
Her two dollies—Jack and Jill.

But, while we admired the heap,
Up that sly old tide did creep;
Floated quickly o'er the sand,
Cut us all off from the land.

"Never mind me," cried poor Lil;
"Save, oh, save my Jack and Jill!"
But, 'mid many a squeal and squall,
Ere they drowned, I saved them all!

off playing with Mungo, and joined their cousins outside the cave.

"Oh, Ferdinand, have you found a turtle?" asked Rachel eagerly.

"Or one of the servants. Is one of the servants about?" asked Bell.

"No, neither a servant nor a turtle. But I have come across Jim Salter's old boat—high and dry, and safe, in the fourth cave from here."

"Oh!" said Bell, in a disappointed voice; "I don't see that that matters much to us. The old boat, even if we could all fit into it, would not take us up the hill to the farm, where I wish we were at this moment."

"No," replied Ferdinand, "the old boat is useless for dry land purposes, but it can take us across those nice dancing waves, to the cool caves at the other side of the bay. What is to prevent our all getting into it, and leaving this horrid dangerous sunshine without any further delay?"

"Of course, of course!" shouted Tony. "How jolly! how delicious! I long for a row. You'll let me handle one of the oars, won't you, Fernie?"

"I don't know about that," answered Ferdinand. "The oars are the worst part of my find: one of them is spliced in the middle, and only tied in its place by a bit of rope. I know Salter intended to get new oars when he was doing up his boat for this season's fishing."

"If the boat lies above high water-mark it will be sure to leak," said Isabel, "for the seams will have opened from the heat of the sun."

"Oh, I daresay it will ship a little water," said Ferdinand, "but nothing to frighten us. It looks trim and tight enough. Poor old Salter often praised his boat to me, and said the *Nancy* brig was the neatest little craft in Yantara Bay. Come along, Bell, anyhow, and look at her."

All the children trooped along the shore, and presently reached the tiny cave where Salter's little deserted boat, the *Nancy* brig, lay. Poor Salter had died in the winter, and as no one had shared his opinion of the poor little worn-out boat, it had lain in its cave, forgotten by everyone, until Ferdinand found it.

CHAPTER II.—THE *NANCY* BRIG.

"WHAT a jolly boat!" exclaimed Tony. "Come along, Mungo. You jump into it, and I'll sit here in the stern. I may guide the rudder, mayn't I, Fernie, if you don't allow me to use the oars?"

"Do shut up for a moment, Tony, and let me speak," said Ferdinand.

But Rachel's eager voice interrupted.

"I'm so longing for a row!" she exclaimed. "I only wish poor old Salter had left his sail here, as well as those stupid oars: then wouldn't we dance over the waves?"

"What do you think about it, Bell?" said Ferdinand, turning to his sister.

Isabel bent forward, and carefully examined the bottom of the boat. Then she looked inside.

"It is in much better condition than I imagined it would be," she said.

"Oh, I am sure it is perfectly safe, Bell. We can float it in half-an-hour when the tide comes up, and then in a few minutes we'll be out of all this grizzling sunshine, in one of the cool caves over there."

"Jolly!" exclaimed Rachel. "Tony, let us fly back to the other cave, and bring down our picnic basket."

Rachel's little eager feet skipped lightly over the sands. Tony followed her. Isabel turned to her brother.

"What are you so grave about, Bell? I am sure it is the only thing to do."

"But you remember our father's express orders, Ferdinand: we were never to go out alone on the bay. You know how often he has told us we were not to go on the water by ourselves."

Ferdinand flushed slightly.

"Father is afraid of our getting into some of the currents," he said. "But I have studied them so often on his map, I know exactly where they are."

"Still, father gave us a distinct order," repeated Isabel.

"I know that, Bell. Perhaps father has said even oftener to me than to you, 'Whatever

happens, Ferdinand, don't go on the bay without a grown person with you!'"

"Yes," said Isabel, "so that really settles the matter. We ought not to go. These waters are full of sharks, and besides, the currents are many, and very dangerous, and very strong. You know that even father did not understand them until he had been here for some little time. We must not go, Ferdinand: so that's an end of the matter."

Isabel turned away as she spoke. The merry shouts of her little cousins were heard, as they trudged back over the sands, carrying the heavy picnic basket between them. Mungo was gambolling round the two children. Already the sun's rays were darting down fiery beams on the sheltered caves.

Ferdinand looked at his sister, then at Rachel, who was a fragile child, and whose small, dark, handsome little face looked even now too pale.

"This is folly," he said. "We must risk the currents: we must do anything to get out of this dangerous place. If we stayed here, by the evening none of us would be alive. Bell, do use your common sense. Our father gave us an order, but he did not know that we would be in the danger we are in to-day. I'll risk my father's anger, and I'll tell him everything when we meet. At present he is far away up the country, and we are all here, in danger of sunstroke. Come along, Bell; put out your strength. Help me to launch the boat."

Isabel turned without another word: she had great faith in Fernie, and hoped he might be right.

The tide was coming up fast, and it was an easy matter for two sturdy young folk to push the boat into the water. The whole little party were soon seated in the *Nancy* brig, and Isabel and Ferdinand each taking an oar, they began to row to the opposite side of the bay.

Ferdinand was an intelligent lad, and he had studied the map which his father had given him of Yantara Bay to some purpose. There was no helm to the old boat, but he and Isabel steered clear of the dangerous currents, and in about an hour had landed at the cool sheltered caves at the opposite side of the narrow bay.

They drew up the *Nancy* brig on the pebbly beach, secured her with some heavy stones and an old piece of rope, and then prepared to enjoy themselves after the hearty happy fashion of English children. The picnic basket was opened, and some of its contents eaten. Rachel fed Mungo with ripe grapes, of which he was very fond, and then the children lay on the sands, and chatted to one another, and talked of the old country which they all remembered and all loved, as only exiles do care for their old home.

At last, towards evening, when the first fierce heat of the day was over, the question of packing up the picnic basket and going home was started.

"Come along, Rachel, and help me," said Ferdinand. "You are a good little packer; and as we have not eaten half of this delicious pie, and Mungo has left us a bunch or two of grapes, we may as well put them away for future use."

Isabel had been sitting a little away from the others, and one of her father's long woollen English stockings was growing fast under her nimble fingers. Now, to the surprise of the three who were bending over the picnic basket, she rose, and said—

"I don't think we have any right to use the boat again. I admit that it may have been necessary this morning, but now the sun is no longer dangerous, and we *can* walk home."

"What!" said Ferdinand, "are we to walk three miles up-hill with this heavy basket, when by using the poor old boat we shall have only half a mile to climb? Really, Bell, you are a little unreasonable."

"Not at all," said Bell. "I prefer the boat, if I only consider my comfort, but I like best to walk when I remember father's orders."

Isabel had a particularly trying way at times. She was a dear, good, sensible girl, but even Ferdinand almost lost patience with her now, particularly as his conscience slightly pricked him.

"We must go back in the boat," he said. "You really are too foolish, Bell. These poor children cannot walk. Come, be sensible; I have proved that I know the currents."

"And I *won't* walk home; so there!" pouted

PREPARING FOR THE PICNIC. (*See p.* 7.)

Rachel. "I think you are a very horrid cruel cousin even to ask me to do such a thing, Bell."

Isabel flushed slightly.

"I won't say any more," she answered. "We are disobeying my father, and it is against my will I join you, Ferdinand. You know you are doing wrong now, for if the children cannot walk up hill for three miles, you certainly can, and you can go and fetch a carriage for us, which would take us all home without any trouble."

"Yes; and when should I be back?" retorted Ferdinand. "You forget the heavy night dews, Bell. Oh, come, help me to launch the boat: it is really the only sensible way for us to get home."

While Ferdinand was speaking Isabel was rolling up her great ball of yarn. Now she slipped it and her knitting into one of the big pockets of her apron, and walked down to the edge of the beach, where the old boat lay.

As she and Ferdinand pushed it further into the water, she avoided looking at him, and as the brother and sister once more handled the oars, they felt that a little cloud had come between them.

Rachel and Tony cuddled themselves up comfortably in the stern of the boat, and Mungo lay at their feet. Rachel was so tired that she was almost dropping asleep, but Tony's sparkling black eyes were roving here and there in search of fresh amusement.

"Oh, I say, look at that shark over there!" he exclaimed suddenly. As he spoke he jerked himself half out of the boat, and Ferdinand, bending forward to save him, leant too heavily on his frail oar, which snapped asunder, the lower and longer end floating away in the direction of the hungry shark.

Perhaps it was this accident, or perhaps Ferdinand, not feeling quite happy, was not using the skill which he had shown in the morning—certain it is that before the children had time to say a word, or the little boat to recover itself after the violent lunge which the breaking of the oar had caused, it was caught in one of the fast sweeping outward currents which abound in these waters, and carried rapidly out to sea.

Isabel threw down her oar, and Ferdinand faced round and gazed at her.

"You were right, Bell," he said. "Heaven forgive me!" he added. "What have I done?" His face was very pale. He knew even better than Isabel what danger they were in. "I don't deserve that you should ever speak to me again, Bell," he continued.

"Nonsense, Fernie," she answered. "It's done, and I'm not the one ever to scold you."

Then she bent forward and kissed her brother. Her eyes—steady, honest, true—looked into his.

"We mustn't be cowards, on account of the children," she whispered.

The short twilight had come when the oar broke, and almost immediately afterwards it was followed by darkness. Rachel was still sleeping soundly, with her head on Mungo's shoulder, and Tony, sitting upright, was watching his cousins with an amused smile on his face. The broken oar had caused him intense secret fun.

"You are in a jolly fix now, Fernie!" he exclaimed. "How will you manage with that stump of an oar? Why don't you begin to row? If you feel at all lazy, shall I try my hand?"

"It will be dark in a moment," whispered Ferdinand to his sister. "I only wish Tony was asleep, as well as Rachel."

"What are you whispering about, you two?" asked the boy.

Then, frightened at their silence, and startled at the gathering darkness, he was about to put his hand on Rachel's shoulder to wake her, when Isabel rose, and balancing herself carefully, so as not to upset the frail little boat, came and sat down by the boy's side.

"Don't wake Rachel, Tony," she said. "She is tired, and not very cold at present, and it will be quite time enough for her to be uncomfortable by-and-by."

"What do you mean by uncomfortable, Bell? How queer you and Fernie look; and how dark it has grown! And why don't you use your stump of an oar, Fernie, and pull us across to land? Oh, dear! Why, we're quite far from both the shores now, and how fast we are going! I don't like it—the boat rocks so."

"Tony," said Bell, "are you going to be a brave little boy, and a help and a comfort? You can if you like, you know."

"Oh, Bell! what is the matter?"

"Or you can be the other thing: the greatest worry, and even danger to us all."

"I'm not a worry nor a danger," said Tony, pouting.

"Well, then, you'll be the first thing. Kiss me, and promise."

Tony raised his childish face.

"I do love you, Bell; but you frighten me, all the same," he said.

"You promise to be brave, Tony."

"Yes, I promise. Why aren't we going home? It's getting so dark and chilly."

"I must whisper to you quite low, darling little Tony. Neither Fernie nor I can row with a broken oar, and besides, we have got into one of the dangerous currents. Tony dear, we cannot go home."

"We can't go home?" echoed Tony. "Then we'll be drowned. Oh, Bell, you are not in earnest? You and Fernie are not going to keep us in this horrid boat, to be drowned or eaten up by sharks!"

Isabel put her arm more firmly round the little fellow's waist.

"I trust you not to be a coward, Antony," she said. "It does not at all follow that we shall be drowned or eaten by sharks. We may come across some vessel, which may pick us up; or this current that we are now in may land us on the coast. But everything depends on our being very quiet and very calm. We must sit as still as ever we can: that is, you and Rachel must, and I think Ferdinand and I can help to balance the boat a little with the one remaining oar. I only wish I dared use it to scull with."

"It's so dark," cried Tony. "Don't go away from me, Bell, please, or I know I shall scream out. Oh, Bell! do you think God is punishing us for going out in the boat against Uncle Michael's wishes? You're the only good one of us, Bell. I expect He is awfully angry with the rest of us. We are like Jonah, aren't we?"

"Who's like Jonah?" asked Rachel, suddenly wakening, and looking round in surprise. "Who's like Jonah? And where in the world are we?"

"We are all like Jonah," answered Tony, his self-control leaving him at the sound of Rachel's voice. "We are all being drowned as fast as possible, Rachel, and we are going to the bottom of the sea, to be eaten by the sharks for their supper. Oh, I am so frightened! I can't help being a coward." And the little boy began to sob loudly.

What might have happened at this moment had Rachel too broken down can never be known, but to the relief of the two elder children the little creature seemed quite to forget herself in her earnest desire to comfort Tony.

"I don't believe we are going to be drowned," she said. "Fernie and Bell wouldn't sit there so calm if we were. Let's get down into the bottom of the boat, Tony, and put our arms round one another, and get Mungo to sit between us. And I'll tell you a story, and I'll put Mungo into it, and he shall talk, and do all kinds of things, the same as if he was a fairy dog."

Tony was too much of a baby, for all his nine years, not to be instantly cheered by this proposal. The two children sat down in the bottom of the boat, and Mungo got between them.

With a sigh of relief Isabel took her seat near Ferdinand. The poor boy had not opened his lips for some time.

"Keep up heart, Fernie," whispered Bell to him.

"Yes, I will do my best," he answered back. "But I can never forgive myself, never!"

"Yes, you can, and must. But in any case you have no time to think of yourself at all at present. You must use all your wits, and so must I, to save these poor little children."

"The moon will be up in about an hour," said Ferdinand; "then we can see better. Oh, Bell, if only we might have the good fortune to meet a fishing-smack, or a vessel of some sort."

"That's the worst of this bay," said Bell. "It's a small place, and very lonely."

"We are not in the bay now," said Ferdinand. "Don't you feel how the little boat creaks and rocks? I wonder where it will land us?"

"Don't wonder anything, Fernie. Wait, and see. We shall know better when the moon gets up."

Rachel and Tony kept on talking in the stern of the boat. For the present all Tony's fears were gone. He even laughed as he listened to Rachel's stories. The elder brother and sister held each other's hands. The frail little boat was now rushing along so fast that each moment they expected to be upset. It seemed scarcely possible that it could live in so swift a current.

Suddenly it bumped up against something, stopped for an instant, turned round, and then, as Isabel and Ferdinand expected to feel the cold waters closing over them, began to move gently and easily forward. The boat had struck against a great mass of seaweed, which had pushed it out of the dangerous current, and although it was still going outwards, it was now in smooth water.

At this moment, too, the moon arose, and the children saw that they were out on an almost waveless sea. From their low position they could scarcely see the distant line of shore, but unless they were unfortunate enough to get into another current, they were now almost out of danger.

"We *have* had an escape," said Isabel. "The *Nancy* brig is a brave little boat, or that great mass of ugly seaweed would have sent her to the bottom."

"On the contrary, it has saved her and us," said Ferdinand. "We will wait until daylight comes, Bell, and then you and I will take turns to scull with our one oar. I see we are still drifting out to sea. By the morning we can't be very far from some part of the coast."

"Then," said Bell, "I propose that we open our picnic basket, and have some food."

"What a good thing we didn't finish all that pie at dinner-time!" said Tony. "What should we do now? for I can tell you I am awfully hungry."

"You must eat as little as you can, then, my small man," said Ferdinand. "We must be careful of the contents of that precious picnic basket, for there is no saying how long we may have to live in this boat."

"*I'll* dole out the supper," said Isabel. "The worst of it is we have so little to drink: only one bottle of water left, two bunches of grapes, and six bananas."

"We'll have a banana each now," said Ferdinand, "and two grapes apiece. Isabel, are you firm enough to put us on an allowance, and make us stick to it, whether we get awfully thirsty or not?"

"Yes," replied the brave girl. "And to prove to you that I can be firm, I'll always eat myself exactly half what I give to the others!"

(*To be continued.*)

GRANNY'S STORY.

(*See Coloured Frontispiece.*)

"PLEASE, tell us a story," said blue-eyed Fan,
"And we'll sit as still as mice, dear Gran";
And they all cried in chorus, Fan, Kitty, and Annie:
"*Please* tell us a story, dearest Granny."

"You know all my stories," Granny said,
"But I'll show you a funny new game instead;
I can make, though it may seem past belief,
A bishop out of my handkerchief.

"This knot you see makes his lordship's hat—
Now what do you think, my dears, of that?
And there are his two arms stretched out so,
For he's preaching a nice little sermon, you know.

"'Be good,' says the bishop, 'my dear little girls'"—
Here the congregation shook all its curls,
And gazed at his lordship with grave wide eyes,
And the three little maids gave three little sighs.

"'Be always good to your kind old Granny,
Don't tease her for stories when she hasn't any;
Don't tangle her wool when she's going to knit,
For she doesn't like it one little bit.

"'And now,' says the bishop, 'my sermon's done.'"
"Ah, then," said Kitty, "we'll have some fun;
For you'll tell us a real right story now,
About, 'Once on a time and long ago.'"

ROBERT RICHARDSON.

"STOP THIEF!"

"I FINK dis is de biggest, boofullest garden me ever see'd! But where is de streets? d're all dorn!"

This was Queenie's verdict as they drove from the station, and were set down at Aunt Mary's pretty cottage in the charming village of Summerleighton.

"Oh, you dear little cockney!" laughed kind Aunt Mary, kissing her. "One can see you've never been out of the sound of Bow Bells yet."

"Why, she's never seen anything bigger than a square garden yet, Aunt Mary," put in Alfred, with the superiority of nine years old. "She's *very* little—quite our baby still, you know. But I've been down here before, haven't I, though? and yet I think I never saw any garden I ever liked so much! It's very kind of you to invite us to stay with you, Aunt Mary."

"'HERE . . . IS A DEAR LITTLE BASKET FOR YOU'" (*p.* 13).

"I'm sure I'm very pleased to see you, dear children, and I hope you'll enjoy yourselves, and be good. Remember, you must do what Priscilla the maid tells you, and not tease Sambo the cat."

"Me *never* teases cats," put in Queenie. "Me loves cats, tittens, and old cats too. But Johnny pulls their tails sometimes, auntie!" she added gravely.

"Oh! only just for fun, Aunt Mary, just to hear them spit and swear; but I promise I won't pull Sambo's!"

But as auntie led the way to tea he tweaked Queenie's locks behind her back.

"Oh, you little tell-tale-tit! I'll pull your tail for you!"

"Don't!" said Queenie, her eyes filling. "If you're rude, I'll tell Tom when he comes."

But the sight of Aunt Mary's well-spread tea-table diverted their minds from all further bickering. It was just crowded with all the delicious things you get in the country in summer-time — such home-made bread and fresh honey, golden butter and red jam, such new-laid eggs and thick yellow cream! And all the while the children were eating, the warm, yet fresh, September evening air blew in at the open window, and gave them such appetites as they had not had in hot stuffy London for weeks.

The weather was fine, and for the next few days nothing could exceed the children's happiness. They helped Aunt Mary in her garden, they explored with her all the pretty walks which lay round Summerleighton, and grew brown as berries and hungry as hunters. They were also very good, even Johnny, which goes such a long way towards making a holiday pleasant. Neither Aunt Mary, nor Priscilla, nor Sambo had any fault to find. The only thing that at all marred little Queenie's perfect bliss was the fact that Tom was not with them. Tom was

the big brother—a big important brother in the eyes of the other three: a very grand person, already earning his own living as clerk in an office. Imagine Queenie's delight, then, when she got a letter from him, all to herself (for was she not Tom's especial pet?—if, indeed, one can make a distinction in favour of one person, when everyone who knew Queenie seemed to spoil her).

The letter, which was read out to its little receiver by Alfred, was to the effect that Tom's master had kindly offered him a holiday the next week, and that Tom would come down to Summerleighton from Saturday till Monday.

Everyone was delighted. The only trouble now was that, whenever kind Aunt Mary proposed any expedition or new occupation, the children wished to keep it "till Tom comes." And though they counted the days and chalked them off each evening, it seemed a long time till Tom should arrive.

The rosy apples hung unpicked on the tree in the corner, the great excursion to Ashey Down, whence you could see three counties, was postponed, and Aunt Mary's wonderful cabinet of curiosities from India remained unopened, all awaiting Tom's visit. But there was one thing the children could not resist: that was a ripe blackberry. What children can? And the blackberries themselves, now they were ripe, would not wait for Tom.

Therefore, one morning, when Aunt Mary produced baskets, and suggested a blackberrying expedition down Marling Lane, no one demurred.

"My jam cupboard wants re-filling," she said, "for next year's store. Eat all you like and bring me all you can. I promise you blackberry pudding for dinner to-morrow, and a little pot of jam each to take back to London town!"

"Here's a large basket for you, Master Alf, because you're the biggest; mind you fill it. And here, Queenie dear," added Priscilla, "is a dear little basket for you, all pink and white, like your cheeks. Why, Master Johnny, whatever have you got there?"

"Don't you see? A ball. It came over the fence from next door. I expect it belongs to that rude boy next door who throws stones at Sambo."

"You ought to throw the ball back to him," suggested Priscilla.

"Not I! I'm not sure it is his. And besides, I found it in Aunt Mary's garden, and as she doesn't want to play ball, I'm sure she'll let me have it!"

And Johnny stuck the ball in his pocket. Where there is a will there is a way, in wrong as well as in right. Johnny had made up his mind to keep the ball, you see.

"QUEENIE STOOD DIRECTING THE OPERATIONS" (*p.* 14).

Have you ever been blackberrying? Of course you have! And you know exactly what Alf and Johnny and Queenie did that lovely autumn afternoon. You will remember how hot the sun was, and how nice and shady the deep lane. How crimson and black and bright red, in every shade and hue of ripeness, the tempting fruit hung among the dark green hedges high overhead! How mockingly they seemed to look down upon you! Pick me, if you dare! Because, oh! the thorns! You will *never* forget them, not if you live to be a hundred. Each particularly tempting spray seemed to have armed itself specially with particularly big thorns.

Alf scorned them—outwardly, at least. He flung off his hat and boldly got into the ditch or up the bank, and reached up at them. He pro-

"THE BOY MADE A DIVE AT THE . . . BASKETS."

bably felt that the only chance of blackberry pudding lay with him; for Johnny's mouth was already crimson, and his basket still empty; while as for Queenie, who could possibly think of allowing her to prick and tear her dear little cheeks and hands with the cruel thorns?

Alf worked like a man, and his basket filled fast, though an occasional "Oh!" and a finger thrust with a wince into his mouth, showed that the brambles did not let their robber off unpunished. Johnny hung like a fly on to the steep bank, plucking wildly, at great risk of a tumble. But at intervals he suddenly jumped down into the lane and executed a dance of pain, accompanied by a howl. In the background Queenie stood directing the operations, pointing out the likeliest-looking places.

But in the distance, all the while, the merry party were being stealthily watched. The boy from next door, the boy who had lost his ball, was spying upon them, quite unseen, round a corner of the hedge.

He watched his opportunity. At the very moment when Johnny was glued against the bank with his back to the road, and Alf trying to extricate his coat from a particularly tough bramble, the boy made a dive at the now well-filled baskets of spoil.

There was a scream from Queenie, and then, by the time both boys had turned round, the lane was empty, the baskets gone.

The children stood open-mouthed, too astonished for words. At last Queenie found her breath.

"Dere!" she pointed. "It looked like a boy—a big boy—he went away dere!"

"P'raps it was an evil fairy!" said Johnny, gazing round him. "Or a gnome, or a dwarf!"

Queenie clutched Alf's coat, very alarmed.

"Rubbish!" he said. "There are no such things! It must have been a man or a boy. Come on: we must find him. But he's got a long start. Make haste. What *will* Aunt Mary say about the baskets?"

"And the blackberry pudding!" said Johnny sorrowfully.

"You come on with Queenie, and I'll run ——"

"No, no!" said Queenie. "Me won't be left 'lone without Alfie—'cos of fairies and gnomes, and——"

She looked as if she was going to cry. There was nothing for it but to stay with her, and the whole party now pursued their way back along the lane, looking very crestfallen and weary.

"'HE WENT AWAY DERE!'"

"I put the biggest in the basket," sighed Johnny, "and now we've lost them! and they were such beauties; I wish I'd eaten more!"

"I don't see signs of anyone," said Alf.

"It *must* have been a bad fairy," decided Queenie. "I knows now dat fairies is true!"

The "bad fairy," in the meantime, was rushing upon his fate. He was a bigger boy than Alf, and his legs were longer, and he had a good start, though the baskets were heavy. But he kept looking behind him, and never in front. So, round a sweep of the road, he ran full tilt against Aunt Mary and Tom—the latter just come down by the train, and on his way to join the blackberry party.

In an instant auntie had recognised her baskets, and the boy's hurried actions proved the truth of her suspicions. He found Tom's hand on his coat collar, and the spoil taken from him. He made no attempt at denial, only remarking sulkily—

"The little chap took my ball, and I want to pay him out!"

"QUEENIE FOUND HERSELF LIFTED UP."

In the meantime the pursuers grew slacker than ever. The lane seemed to be much longer on the way back than it had done when they set out on their expedition, all eager for the fray.

"It *was* a fairy, and he's gone right away to fairy-land, baskets and all, and we'll never see them again; and I 'se tired, awfully, and I'll sit down!" remarked Queenie, as they came to a hog-backed stile.

"You *are* a stupid little child to get tired! But for you, we'd have caught the boy by now!"

"Oh, no; it was a fairy, I am quite sure it was!" persisted poor Queenie.

"What was?" asked a familiar voice round the corner of the hedge, and the next moment Queenie found herself lifted up to the top bar of the stile.

"Hullo! it's Tom come!" cried Johnny, jumping up on it.

"And oh! I say, if he hasn't got the baskets back!" added Alf in astonishment.

Queenie looked first at Tom, and then at the recovered treasure.

"I sink 'ou is a fairy—a *good* fairy," she said, and flung her dear little arms round him, and gave him *such* a hug.

But on the way home Aunt Mary had a little talk, both with the boy from next door and with Johnny.

The next day, when blackberry pudding came up for dinner, Johnny grew very red.

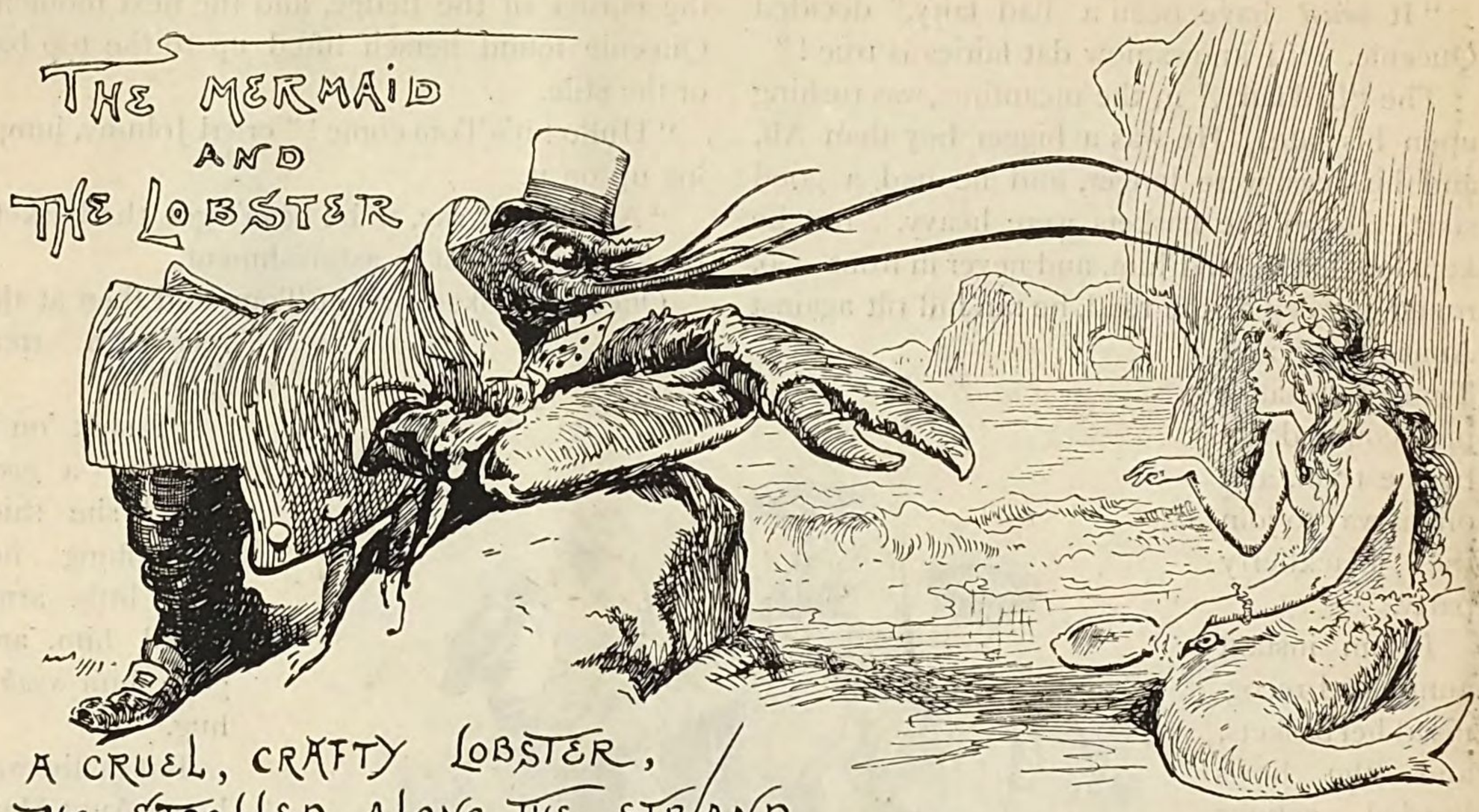
"Very nearly lost, wasn't it, old man?" said Tom good-humouredly. "But, Aunt Mary, may we send a help of it in next door? It's an excellent pudding, and I have no doubt it will taste extra good to two fellows now that the ball and baskets are back in the possession of their lawful owners, who, no doubt, will remember a certain little rhyme about—'He who takes what isn't his'n, etc., etc.'"

"Certainly," said Aunt Mary, and a large slice of the pudding was accordingly sent round.

But Queenie, who was sitting almost in Tom's pocket, laid her head against his sleeve and looked up into his face: "*I* tink it tastes all the better 'cos my good fairy's here to eat it wid me!"

EDITH E. CUTHELL.

THE MERMAID AND THE LOBSTER

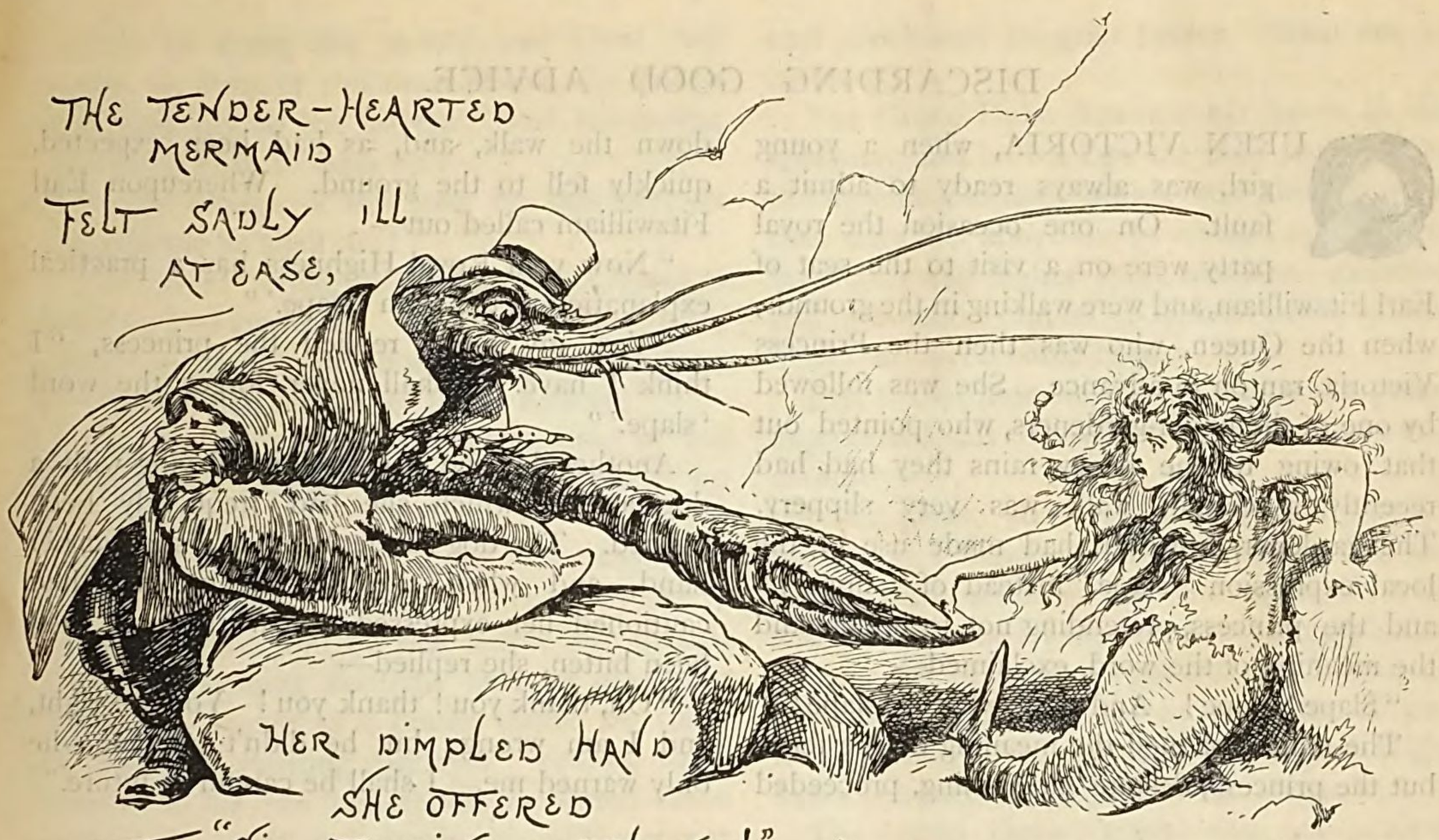


A CRUEL, CRAFTY LOBSTER,
HE STROLLED ALONG THE STRAND,
AND MET A LITTLE MERMAID,
WHO'D VENTURED NEAR
THE LAND.

"I'M CHARMED TO
SEE YOU, MADAM"
HE OFFERED HER
HIS HAND.

BUT, STRANGE TO SAY, TO
TAKE IT
SHE SCARCELY SEEMED INCLINED.
"I'D RATHER NOT," SHE FALTERED,
"DEAR SIR, IF YOU DON'T MIND."
"DO YOU SUPPOSE I'D PINCH YOU?-
THAT THOUGHT IS MOST UNKIND."

THE CRUEL, CRAFTY LOBSTER
HERE SHED A BRINY TEAR.
"THIS LACK OF FRIENDLY FEELING
IS TERRIBLE MY DEAR;
SO YOUNG AND SO SUSPICIOUS,
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG,
I FEAR!"



"YOU'RE PINCHING!" SHRIEKED
THE MERMAID
"LET GO, SIR, I IMPLORE!"
SHE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE SPOKEN
TO THE HANDLE OF A DOOR;
THE WICKED, WICKED LOBSTER
SQUEEZED HARDER THAN
BEFORE.

IF SOMETHING HADN'T
HAPPENED
HE MIGHT BE GRASPING YET,
WITH ALL THOSE CRUEL FINGERS,
THAT HAND SO SOFT AND WET,
BUT A FISHER CAME BEHIND
HIM,
AND CAUGHT
HIM IN A NET.

THAT NIGHT THE LITTLE
MERMAID
SLEPT IN HER CORAL GROT;
BUT THE LOBSTER FOUND
HIS QUARTERS
QUITE TEN DEGREES TOO HOT:
THE REASON WAS
QUITE SIMPLE-
THEY BOILED
HIM
IN A POT

DISCARDING GOOD ADVICE.

QUEEN VICTORIA, when a young girl, was always ready to admit a fault. On one occasion the royal party were on a visit to the seat of Earl Fitzwilliam, and were walking in the grounds, when the Queen, who was then the Princess Victoria, ran on in advance. She was followed by one of the under-gardeners, who pointed out that owing to the heavy rains they had had recently a certain walk was very slippery. The gardener, however, had made use of the local expression "slape," instead of "slippery," and the princess, pretending not to understand the meaning of the word, exclaimed—

"Slape! slape! And pray, what is 'slape'?"

The man explained the meaning of the term, but the princess, despite all warning, proceeded down the walk, and, as had been expected, quickly fell to the ground. Whereupon Earl Fitzwilliam called out—

"Now your Royal Highness has a practical explanation of the term 'slape.'"

"Yes, my lord," replied the princess, "I think I have. I shall never forget the word 'slape.'"

Another day she persisted in playing with a dog against which she had frequently been warned. The dog suddenly made a snap at her hand, and when the gentleman who had cautioned her expressed a fear that she had been bitten, she replied—

"Oh, thank you! thank you! You are right, and I am wrong; but he didn't bite me—he only warned me. I shall be careful in future."

CARRIED OFF BY AN APE.*

A CHILD'S ADVENTURE IN GERMANY.

ONE fine clear spring morning, about a century and a half ago, there was great excitement and uproar in the streets of a large German town, the capital of one of the lesser States. The reigning prince and a chosen band of his soldiers had just brought in as a prisoner a notorious robber of the neighbouring mountains, whose very name had long been the terror of the whole district, and whose great courage and wonderful skill with sword and gun, together with the aid of a gang of comrades as savage and determined as himself, had enabled him for years to defy all efforts to effect his capture.

At length the Grand Duke himself had vowed to hunt down the brigand who had done so much mischief. He scoured the mountain glens with his soldiers, and, after a long and hard chase, and a desperate battle, he destroyed the robber-band, and captured their cruel leader.

When the news got abroad that "Black Rudolf" was taken at last, the whole population of the city, men, women, and children, crowded to stare at the fettered ruffian as if he had been a caged tiger. They pointed him out to each other, and repeated countless wild stories of his cunning, strength, and cruelty—how he had tortured his prisoners to wring out of them a larger ransom; how he had again and again ventured into the town itself, disguised, in the hope of fresh plunder, and how, to prove his skill as a marksman, he had once cut away the topmost leaf of a distant tree with a single bullet from his long mountain gun.

The Grand Duke was too brave a man to taunt or insult his captive, but he was none the less fully determined that this mischievous ruffian, who had done so much harm to his country and his people, should never have a

* A similar adventure is said to have befallen Oliver Cromwell before he was two years old.

chance of doing any more; and when they halted in front of the town prison, the prince said solemnly to the governor and his guards, who came forth to meet him—

"Take charge of this man for this day; on the morrow he shall die!"

"So be it!" cried the robber, with a frown of defiance; "I am ready. And as for thee, Prince, when trouble and affliction shall fall upon thine own head, then remember Black Rudolf!"

But the prince, either not hearing or not heeding the savage words, rode calmly on toward the palace.

But before he reached it he was startled by a burst of cries of dismay, uttered by many voices at once, and he saw before him groups of people rushing excitedly from all sides into the palace square, as if drawn thither by some strange and startling spectacle. Fearing some disaster to his own household, the Grand Duke spurred his horse, and, dashing round the corner of the square, beheld a sight which for the moment literally struck him dumb with terror.

Clambering up the carved front of the palace was a huge black African ape, from whose short thick neck hung the broken end of the chain that had hitherto confined him to the farther corner of the great court-yard, while in one of his black hairy paws he clutched a small white bundle, which the prince, with a thrill of unspeakable horror, suddenly perceived to be an *infant*, and that infant his only child!

The whole household had come rushing into the court-yard on the first alarm, and in the midst of the throng stood the Grand Duchess herself, watching, with hands clasped in silent agony, the peril of her darling.

The moment the Grand Duke was seen approaching, the crowd flocked round him with cries of joy, as if all would be well now that *he* had come. But they were mistaken, for, strong and courageous though he was, the poor prince was quite as much at a loss what to do as everyone else.

It was indeed a terrible position. To give chase to the ape would only make it fling the child down headlong, in order to lighten itself for flight. To fire at the monster would be more fatal still; for even if the infant escaped being hit by the bullet, it must certainly fall and perish with its grim bearer. What was to be done?

The Grand Duke clenched his hands in desperation, and bit his lips till they bled; while the mischievous ape—which was already more than sixty feet above the pavement, and mounting higher and higher every moment—gibbered and grinned at him as it looked down at him from that unreachable height.

Just at that moment the captain of the guard approached his despairing master, and said earnestly—

"If it please your Highness, I should judge, from what I know of these creatures, that the ape means to set down the child upon the roof, and may then be reached by a well-aimed bullet, without risk of harm to the infant. But in all the land I know only *one* man capable of performing such a feat, and that one is your Highness's prisoner, Black Rudolf the Brigand!"

The Grand Duke started—and not without good reason—as he recalled the words of the robber's fierce farewell: words which were now being fulfilled in a way of which the speaker himself had never dreamed:

"When trouble and affliction shall fall upon thine own head, then remember Black Rudolf!"

"But what if *he* should fail too?" asked the prince, in a voice which trembled, in spite of all his efforts to steady it.

"He never misses his aim," replied the officer, "as your Highness hath often seen for yourself."

The Grand Duke *had* seen it, indeed, and he hesitated no longer.

"Fetch him hither at once," he cried. "Promise him life should he succeed; and bring likewise the gun which he is wont to use, for he will take a surer aim with *it*."

The gun and its formidable owner arrived together, just at the moment when the ape, having reached the roof of the palace, set down the child as the old warrior had foretold, and then perched himself close beside it, ready to snatch it up again upon the slightest alarm.

In a few hasty words the prince explained the whole matter to his captive, and entreated him, in an almost supplicating tone, to do his best.

"And how if I refuse?" growled Rudolf. "Thou hast slain my stout comrades, and hast

doomed me to death; how if I should refuse to help thee in thy need?"

"Thou wilt *not* refuse," answered the Grand Duke, looking him full in the face. "Brave men war with men, not with helpless children!"

This appeal, coming in place of the threats and abuse which he expected, touched even the iron-hearted ruffian, for the worst men are not wholly bad. His savage face softened visibly, and his gruff tones lost something of their dogged sullenness as he replied—

"'Tis the first time for many a year that anyone hath spoken to me as if I *were* a man. Give me the gun—I will do my best."

All the spectators held their breath as Rudolf raised his long gun to his shoulder, and, aiming long and carefully (as any man might well do when shooting for life and death), fired.

The report of the heavy piece echoed through the silent court-yard like a clap of thunder, and was followed by a hoarse cry and a heavy fall.

The Grand Duke, utterly overcome, had closed his eyes as the shot was fired; but a shout of joy from the bystanders told him that all had gone well. The ape had fallen, while the infant remained uninjured upon the roof.

As yet, however, only half the work was done. There still remained the task of bringing down the child, which a single gust of wind might hurl from that perilous height, to be dashed in pieces upon the pavement, a hundred feet below.

But Rudolf was not the man to leave his work half finished. Before anyone else had time to stir hand or foot, he darted into the palace, and, re-appearing in an instant at one of the uppermost windows, clambered out on to the roof. Accustomed as he was to run at full speed among the dizziest precipices of the mountains, it was an easy matter for him to reach the child, which, so far from being frightened by his black-bearded, savage countenance, stretched forth its tiny hands to him confidingly, and smiled in his face as he took it up.

"Ha!" cried the robber, with a grim laugh; "methinks the child dislikes me not as the father doth. We seem to be friends already!"

A few minutes later the royal infant was safe in his mother's arms.

This strange adventure was destined to have very unexpected results. The brigand conceived a strong affection for the child that he had saved, and readily accepted a place offered to him in the royal household by the Grand Duke, in recognition of his good service. The little prince and his rescuer soon became inseparable companions; and when the former succeeded to the throne of his father, the trustiest and most favoured of all his attendants was the "good old Rudolf" who had once been "Black Rudolf the Robber."

DAVID KER.

"EARLY TO BED, AND EARLY TO RISE."

"IT'S a beautiful book," said Margery.

"A beautiful book," said Madeleine.

"A boo—ti—ful book," repeated small Jack.

"There's 'Cock Robin' in it," said Margery.

"And 'See-saw, Margery Daw,'" said Madeleine.

"Yes," said Jack.

"And 'Ten little Niggers,'" said Margery, turning over the pages quickly; "it really is a beautiful book."

"What is this one, Margery?" asked Madeleine. Margery did not answer. Instead of reading aloud the nursery rhyme, she frowned, and began to get very red in the face.

"Is it a bad one?" asked Madeleine.

Still Margery did not answer, she only stared at the page in front of her.

"Oh, Margery, do read it," said Madeleine; "we shall have to go to bed soon."

"That's it," said Margery—"nurse's going-to-bed rhyme."

"Not 'Early to bed, and early to rise?" said Madeleine.

"I am so sorry that is in it; I am so tired of hearing about the man who will be healthy——"

"Wealthy and wise," added Jack.

Margery nodded her head.

"And on the other side of the very same page is 'To bed, to bed, says Sleepy Head.' It's a horrid book, and I don't like it!"

"A horrid book," said Jack.

"That is where nurse learnt them," said Madeleine.

"Of course," said Margery, shutting up the book with a bang.

Just then nurse came into the room.

"Go and say 'good-night' to mother, and put away your new book until to-morrow," she said. "Remember that 'Early to bed, and early to rise ——'"

But Margery and Madeleine were out of the room before she had finished her sentence.

"MARGERY STANDING AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRCASE" (*p.* 22).

"What shall we do?" said Margery, as she and Madeleine walked slowly downstairs.

"We must do something," said Madeleine.

"I know," said Margery, "we'll tear the leaf out."

"Oh, Margery!" said Madeleine.

But there was no time for more, for nurse was close behind them with small Jack.

"May I take 'Mother Goose' to bed with me?" asked Margery, when "good night" had been said, and the children were on their way upstairs again.

Nurse looked doubtful.

"Me want to take it to bed," said Jack.

"No, put it on the shelf until the morning," said nurse; "perhaps I may have time to cover it this evening."

"Oh, Jack, let Margery take it," said Madeleine.

"Now, Miss Madeleine, did you not hear what I said? put it on the shelf until the morning," said nurse. "Be quick to bed. Do you want me to tell you about Sleepy Head, Slow, and Greedy Nan?"

"No, we do not," said Margery rudely.

"Miss Margery!" said nurse.

Margery said nothing, and nurse did not notice the frown on her face as she tucked her in bed, and wished her "good-night."

Then nurse, tired out with her day's work, went downstairs to her supper, feeling that her three small charges were quite safe in the only place where they could not get into mischief—bed.

But nurse would not have felt so comfortable

if she could have seen what happened upstairs, five minutes after she left the room.

A small figure in a white night-dress tumbled out of her own bed, and walked across to another bed. Then there was a great deal of whispering, and another small figure tumbled out of the other bed.

"I'll go and fetch it," said the first small figure.

"Oh, do be careful," said the second.

And then, if only nurse had been able to see through two doors, up three flights of stairs, and round several corners, she would have been horrified to see one of her young ladies creep out of the bed-room, up the stairs, into the nursery, feel her way in the darkness to the book-shelf, and take down a book.

Of course the young lady was Margery, and the book "Mother Goose."

Madeleine stood at the bed-room door, waiting, fearing, hoping, dreading. She was not nearly so daring as Margery, and she imagined she heard footsteps ever so many times before she saw Margery standing at the top of the staircase, the book in her hand, and a smile on her lips.

Madeleine was so pleased to see her safely back, that she clapped her hands, and gave a little scream of joy.

"Hush," cried Margery, and she crept downstairs into the bed-room as quietly as a little mouse.

"Early to bed, and early to rise," said Margery; "there it is."

"Oh, we mustn't tear it out," said Madeleine; "it will spoil the book, and it won't do any good."

"It spoils the book to have it in," said Margery, and she boldly tore the new, clean page out.

She looked rather frightened when it was done.

"Now," she said, "you tear it up into twenty hundred thousand little bits, whilst I put the book back in its place."

"Don't, Margery," said Madeleine.

But Margery would not listen. She ran out of the room and up the stairs into the nursery. She forgot all about creeping and moving quietly, in her haste to get the book back in its place; for as she crossed the landing she thought she heard someone coming upstairs. Madeleine fancied she heard someone coming too, and with a cry of "Margery," she sprang back into bed.

There was someone coming—not nurse, but Mary the housemaid; and just as Margery was about to put the book back in its place, she heard Mary coming up the last flight of stairs on her way to the nursery.

Without stopping to think of anything Margery ran behind the curtain and hid herself. She was only just out of sight, when Mary came into the room with her candle.

"She's come to fetch something," thought Margery.

But if that were so, Mary was a long time finding it, and Margery began to feel very uncomfortable, and very tired of keeping still.

"Bother," said Mary aloud; "she said it was on the book-shelf. I can't find it, she'll have to come and look for it herself."

Margery pricked up her ears when she heard the word "book-shelf."

Mary was evidently searching among the books.

"Fairy Tales," she said, reading aloud the title of one of the books, "that's not it. It was Nursery Rhymes, I know, Mother Something's Rhymes, and I'm pretty sure it isn't——"

Mary stopped and gave a little scream.

"What was that?" she said, and giving a louder scream, and calling, "A thief, a thief! Help!" she rushed out of the room.

Margery, terribly frightened, followed her quickly; but Mary never looked behind, until she reached the study, where she ran in almost breathless, to tell her terrible story of a man in the nursery, and footsteps following her. Margery ran into the bedroom, and shut the door.

"What is it, what is it?" said Madeleine.

"Hide under the bed," said Margery; "there is a thief in the nursery; Mary saw him."

Madeleine screamed.

"Be quiet," said Margery; "perhaps he'll go downstairs, and not come into this room."

Madeleine did as she was told, and the two small girls, trembling with fright, crept into the farthest corner under Madeleine's bed.

Presently they heard the sound of footsteps

coming upstairs, not downstairs as they dreaded, and they could hear voices, and a dog's bark.

"It's father," said Madeleine; "let's come out."

"Not till he's caught the thief," said Margery.

The footsteps passed the bedroom and went upstairs.

"What will father do?" said Madeleine.

There was a sound of footsteps coming downstairs, and the bedroom door was opened.

"I hope the children have not been disturbed," said a voice they both knew very well.

"Have you got him?" said Margery, creeping out of her hiding-place.

"Come out, darling," said her father; "there is no thief; Mary made a silly mistake."

"Oh, father, are you sure?" said Margery, jumping into his arms.

"I'm sure I saw something move behind the curtain," said Mary, sobbing.

"Behind the curtain in the nursery, Mary?" said Margery.

"It is all right, darling, it was a mistake," said father, looking angrily at Mary.

"I was behind the curtain," said Margery.

"You?" said father.

"There," said Mary, "I knew there was someone."

Then Margery told the whole story, and Madeleine fetched from beneath her pillow the torn-out leaf.

They went back to the nursery, father carrying Margery; nurse taking Madeleine; and Mary bringing up the rear with Jack, who had slept peacefully through all the noise, and had only waked when the disturbance was over.

They looked behind the curtain, but "Mother Goose," was no longer there. The cover was lying on the floor, but the pages were crumpled and torn. Wag the dog, roused and excited by the cry of "thieves," had attacked the nearest thing he could find, which happened to be "Mother Goose's Nursery Rhyme Book." It was all in pieces; there was only one whole page left, and that was not in the book: it was the page which Madeleine held in her hand, the page on which the words "Early to bed, and early to rise," and "To bed, to bed," were printed.

MAGGIE BROWNE.

CLIMBING THE FALCONS' CRAG.

THE hero of my story was named David Burns. He was just a little Scottish shepherd laddie, running almost as wild over the hills as the sheep he tended, and as happy as the lark that sang in the blue heavens.

David worked for the great laird of Clunie, who lived at the castle in the valley, and owned all the country round about.

To be a shepherd in Scotland is no easy work, especially in the spring-time, when there are many lambs to look after, and all day long David was tramping about the hill-sides, attending to their wants. Sometimes he would find one who had lost its mother, and would have to carry it home long miles to the head shepherd's cottage, that it might be brought up by hand. Often he would have to climb down steep places to reach a little creature that had strayed, or wade into the rushing stream to rescue one from drowning. So you see his life was full of adventures, and just suited to a brave and fearless boy like David.

One fine morning, late in the spring, as young Burns was about his work on the hill-side, he heard a voice call from above, "Hallo, David!" and looking up, saw standing there a lad of about his own age, at sight of whom our hero snatched off his weather-stained cap and stood bare-headed, his eyes glistening with pleasure; for this was Master Willie of Clunie, whose father David served.

"I'm home for the holidays," the young laird said, "and I've been hunting for you every

where to know if you have kept your promise, and found an eagle's nest for us to visit together?"

"I'm blithe to see ye hame an' lookin' sa bonnie. As for the nest, I ken the whereabouts of one. I was just waiting till the wee birdies was grown a bit before I climbed doon an' gathered one for ye, sir," David replied.

"Well, we'll go together this morning: that will be better fun."

"Na; it's na a gude day for the likes of you, sir, to be amongst the hill-tops. See how thick the mists lay there. We maun wait a clearer day, an' take some of the men folks alang."

"Where is the place?" questioned the other.

"Amongst the Falcons' Crag, up Ben Clunie."

"Why, that's not so far," Willie answered. "It's much better sport to go by ourselves." And then, when David sturdily shook his head, he added, "Well, I'm going, at any rate. I'm not afraid. You can do as you please"; and turning on his heel, the boy stalked angrily away.

David stood looking after the retreating figure somewhat sadly, for he loved his young master most devotedly, and would willingly have risked life and limb for his sake. What was he to do? Sit quietly there and let Master Willie climb the Falcons' Crag by himself, and perhaps get lost in the white mist that hung about the mountain-top so thickly?

For David well knew how many a shepherd had lost his life amongst the hills at such a time, falling into some deep gap, and been dashed to pieces hundreds of feet below. Yet his young master had, in his usual headstrong fashion, started by himself, and was already far out of sight.

It took but a few moments for David to decide. Wrapping his tartan plaid around him, and seizing his shepherd's crook, he was soon hastening over the uneven ground, and hurrying up the hill-side as fast as he could in the direction Will Clunie had taken.

Presently he came up with the other, and saying humbly, "Sir, if ye maun gang, I'll gang with ye," walked along beside him.

"Ah, that's your true self, Dave!" the other joyfully exclaimed. "I had an idea you were going to show the white feather."

David made no remark, only a hot flush came into his honest sunburnt little face.

So up they climbed, higher and higher, and nearer the white cloud that rested on the mountain-top, so silent and so still.

At last they reached the place called the Falcons' Crag, and went more cautiously, for the spot was very dangerous, overhanging as it did a deep loch, or lake, below. Above them, creeping lower each moment, hung the cloud of white mist.

"We must hurry and find the nest," Willie said, pointing to the sky above.

"Hist, sir! see yonder!" exclaimed David, excitedly pointing. "Lie down, sir, lie down; ye maun let them get wind of ye."

The boys hastily crouched behind a boulder, and eagerly looked below, where a pair of fine eagles hovered over a ledge of rock, upon which evidently their nest was built. The rocks around were strewn with the bones of sheep and lambs, and David whispered to Will that they must lie quiet till the old birds flew away in search of food, as it would be dangerous to go nearer the nest, in case they attacked them.

Will forgot everything in his anxiety to possess an eaglet and carry it back with him to the castle. They watched with much excitement the two noble birds as they swept round and round in wide circles. Now and again they would rest on their great brown wings without further movement, and then swoop down, without apparent effort, calling to one another, and circling as before.

At last they seemed to decide that it was time to go in search of dinner for themselves and their young ones, and rising high in the air above the mountain-tops, were lost to sight in the mist.

The opportunity was not to be lost. Telling his young master "to bide still a while," and keep a sharp look-out in case the old birds returned, when he was to shout, David unwound the plaid from his body and prepared to descend to the nest, armed only with his shepherd's crook. In another moment he had disappeared over the steep side, and was lost to sight, just as the mist suddenly rolled down, and shut out the rest of the hill from view.

How long he lay there Willie could never decide, but it seemed to him hours that he clung anxiously waiting to hear some sound that would tell what had become of David. He began to wish he had not over-persuaded

IN PERIL. (*See p.* 26.)

the brave lad to undertake such a task. He dared not shout, for fear the two eagles might hasten back to protect their little ones. He crept to the edge and looked for David, but the mist prevented him from seeing what was below.

He could bear the suspense no longer; with caution he lowered himself down to a spot some way beneath, and shouted.

Imagine his terror if you can when the shrill peculiar cry of the king of birds greeted his ear, and the mist clearing at the same moment, he saw that David was making violent efforts to climb towards him, but that an overhanging rock prevented him from doing so.

"Help, help!" cried Will, half frantic at the dangerous position of his friend, not realising how improbable it was that in so lonely a spot such a cry should receive an answer. But two shepherds happened to be near, and came hurrying to the rescue.

They saw at a glance poor David's plight, and fortunately having with them a short coil of rope, they hastily descended to rescue him.

It was only just in time, for the eagles were becoming furious, and as the men lowered the rope to the boy and he slipped his foot into the running loop, they darted towards him, tearing his shirt and lacerating his flesh with their beaks and talons, and screaming loudly. The men both shouted, and while one pelted the birds with pieces of rock and stones, the other, with Will's help, drew our hero to the ledge, bleeding but triumphant. a tiny eaglet clasped in one arm.

After much risk, they succeeded in getting out of their perilous position, but David was too weak from loss of blood to walk, so they hoisted him on their shoulders, and carried him down Ben Clunie and right into Clunie Castle, for Will would have it so.

Of course the laird was very angry at the foolish risk the lads had run in attempting so daring a feat without more assistance. But his eyes sparkled with pleasure as he listened to Will's account of David's courage.

As for that brave lad, he soon recovered from his wounds, and was as happy as before. But to Willie the adventure taught a lesson he never forgot: how nearly a life had been lost simply to gratify his selfish whim. EDITH A. FINDLAY.

TEE-TO-TUM TALES.

By LUCY FARMER, *Author of "The Little Folks' Peep Show," "The Chronicles of Cardewe Manor," &c.*

I.—THE TOY SHIP.

"'MAY I LOOK, TOO?'" (*p.* 27.)

THE children had said that they hoped I would again accompany them to the sea-side, and, indeed, I hoped so too! We had had a pleasant holiday before, and you heard all about it. So when the holiday was talked about, Ethel cried—

"Oh, mother, mayn't we go down with Mrs. Farmer to Beechycombe this year?"

"Where Tom and Ernest are—or near there," added Annie.

"Annie always wants to see Ernest and Tom," said Bobby, "just because they are our cousins, and older than *us*."

"Say, 'older than we are,' Bobby, if you want to be understood by ladies and gentlemen. Suppose I *do* like Tom and Ernest! I have reason. They are never rude, nor cross, nor teasing, like you!"

"They would be if they were *your* brothers!" retorted Bobby. "You would make anyone cross!"

"Come, come, children," said their mother; "no more of this! Perhaps your cousins will not be there at all when you are. So make up your minds. If Mrs. Farmer will accompany you, I daresay there will be no objection."

Of course I agreed. The children are very

obedient as a rule, and, if treated with kindness and firmness, leave nothing to complain of. It was quickly arranged that Annie, Ethel, and Bobby should again go down with me to the sea-side for a month.

"A whole month!" exclaimed Bobby. "I shall fish; I shall catch plenty, and send home some lovely ones! When shall we go, Mrs. Farmer?"

"Next Tuesday. This is Thursday. Your papa will find lodgings on Saturday, and perhaps tell your cousins you are coming. They will meet you, I daresay."

This turned out as we had hoped. We four journeyed down to Beechycombe one July afternoon. It was rather wet, but we played a capital game as we went along, and it kept the children amused. As Annie wishes all little readers to know the game, I will explain it. It may serve to amuse them when they are travelling. The prizes were sugar-plums: a large packet, a smaller packet, and a quite small packet, for the three children. The game is as follows:—

Every animal which they saw counted a certain number; men, women, and children did not count, neither did trains nor engines. Two of us sat on one side, and two on the further side of the carriage. A house counted six, a cow five, a sheep four, a dog three, a cat two, a pig one, and fowls according to number, one each. A goat-chaise was seven, a carriage nine, a cart eight, if drawn by horses. A flock or herd of sheep or cattle numbered twenty.

So the game began—Annie and myself against Ethel and Bobby; and a fine time we had. We laughed very heartily, and, when any strangers got into the compartment, they were very much puzzled to hear us call out, "Cow five! Pig one! Annie, that's my sheep; look your own side! Hurrah! a carriage and two horses; nine for me!" and so on. I am afraid people thought us a little mad.

But we were only very happy, and after a while people in the train helped the children: they pointed out ducks and geese, and a donkey—we had not put him down, but decided to count him as a sheep: why we did so, I forget.

Ethel and her brother won the first prizes.

In this way the time passed pleasantly, and Beechycombe was reached without fatigue. We soon found our lodgings. The woman was very glad to see us, and told us that two "fine young gentlemen" had already called to inquire for the party.

"Tom and Ernest!" cried Annie; "I am sure they have come! How nice! Let us try to find them."

"We must unpack first, and have some tea; in the evening we will go out. Your cousins cannot expect you to go hunting for them immediately," I said.

The children were very good. We all unpacked, and, while we were arranging our things, the landlady prepared tea. We had brought several things to eat, so there was no delay in our meal, and, immediately we had finished, the children hurried away to put on their hats and jackets.

Then off they ran to the beach to watch the waves. Bob, with his usual friendliness, got into conversation with a sailor who was looking through a telescope at something out at sea.

"May I look too?" asked Bobby, with some confidence.

"To be sure," replied the sailor kindly. "Here, let me steady it on my arm. There now; what do you see, master?"

"Only a mist of nothing at all," replied Bobby, "and a black something jumping in and out of it, up and down!"

"Steady now. There, look right out: close t'other eye, my lad," said the man, smiling.

"I can see a black rock, and a black thing sticking up between the clefts in it."

"Ay, ay! Well, that's what we calls the Tee-to-tum Rock, because it seems to show so different at different times, and is dangerous consequently. On that rock there was once a curious wreck—not so long ago neither."

"Oh, tell us about it, please!" cried Ethel, who had come up with Annie to listen. "I love a sea story."

"It isn't much of a sea story, missie; but it's curious, sartinly. The vessel was coming from abroad—Germany, somewhere, and was full of Christmas toys!"

"Full of toys! How splendid!" cried Bobby.

"What kind of toys?" asked Annie.

"All kinds, missie: tin soldiers, fluffy dogs,

and tabby cats; dolls' houses and Noah's arks; swords and guns; Shems, Hams, and Japhets, with their wives; wooden steam-engines, and all kinds o' things for bazaars and toy-shops."

"And the vessel was wrecked?" asked Ethel.

"Yes, on the Tee-to-tum Rock: just the place you wouldn't have expected, perhaps. But it did! Next day we found all the things swimming ashore—cats and dogs; Noah's animals, his family, and the dolls; the soldiers were nearly all lost. You never saw such a queer set of things as we picked up; and I daresay, if you looked, you might find some to-morrow."

"Oh, what fun! We will look!" cried the children. "Thank you, boatman!"

"You're kindly welcome," he replied. "There's a gentleman calling to you. See!"

We all turned and saw two gentlemen, whom the children recognised, after a while, as their cousins Tom and Ernest. They greeted each other warmly, and I was introduced.

"Oh, we've heard of Mrs. Farmer," they replied. "We wish we could have found you earlier. We may not be able to call to-morrow. Isn't it unfortunate! But have you seen the old man in the cave yet?"

"No!" cried Bob. "Is he any fun?"

"I should say so," replied Tom. "Mrs. Farmer, if you take the young ones some day—say to-morrow—he will tell you wonderful things. He is quite a conjurer! I hope you children are good?"

The children looked at me. I replied that they were generally very good.

"Because, if not, the old man will find you out! If I see him, I will tell him you are coming at four o'clock. Will that do?"

"Yes: splendidly. Where does he live?"

"That's a secret. His cave is some distance off. Do you see that big rock there, on the beach? Well, just behind it you will find his cave."

"Are there any toys in it?" asked Annie—"washed-up toys like those the fisherman told us of."

"I suspect there are," replied Ernest, looking at his brother in a curious manner, and nodding.

The young men saw me looking at them very hard, and Master Ernest said—

"You mustn't spoil sport, Mrs. Farmer. Now tell us all about these cousins of ours. We want to hear what they are like, for mother, of course, will want to know!"

There was not much need for me to tell. Bobby soon gave his cousins a full account of Annie and Ethel: how they cried when he teased them; how they disliked music and arithmetic; how one liked reading and the other detested writing; how one was untidy, the other sulky at times, cross and late at meals; and so on, with imitations, which were very amusing.

The girls then "took him off" in turn, and told all his qualities—chiefly his unpleasant ones—"but he isn't a bad boy!" So, as we all returned to our lodgings, the young men learned a good deal; and when the cousins went home they were able to describe my small charges to their mother very accurately and plainly indeed, no doubt.

"To-morrow I will go to the cave," said Master Bob. "I'll be first. Have you any of our money, Mrs. Farmer? Ernest says we must pay twopence each."

"You shall have sixpence when the time comes. Now it is bed-time. Let us read our chapter, and forget the wizard till to-morrow."

Thus ended our first day at Beechycombe.

FAIRY DREAMS.

A LITTLE fairy, tired of flying
Over sea and over land,
Fell asleep when day was dying,
His soft cheek upon his hand.

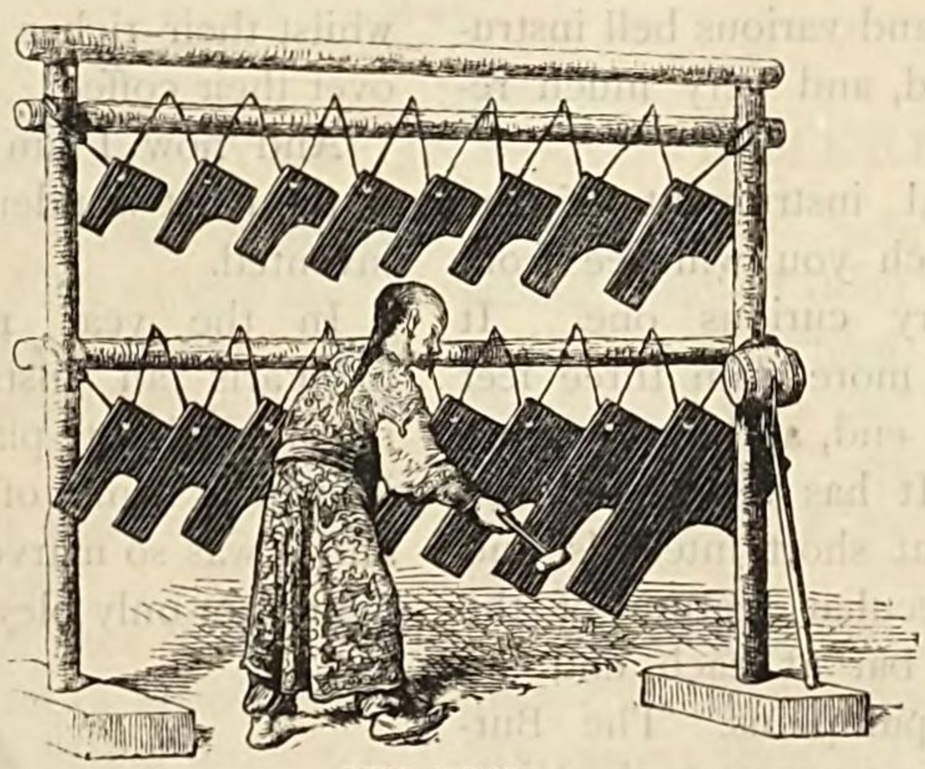
Sweet his dreams were, under cover
Of the stars so large and bright;
Sweeter still be those that hover
Round my darling's cot at night.

TRAVELS IN CURIOSITY LAND.

QUEER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

THE TCHOUNG-TOU.

THERE are so many strange-looking musical instruments in Curiosity Land that it would require a whole volume to describe them to you. They are of all sizes and designs, and such odd-looking things that you would scarcely believe some of them to be musical instruments at all. There is, for instance, the curious instrument of the Chinese which forms the first illustration. It is called the Tchoung-Tou, and is made of thin pieces of wood tied together in the shape of a fan. It is not now in use, but in times gone by it served for beating time, the instrument being held in the right hand, and gently tapped on the palm of the left hand to mark the time.



THE KING.

The Chinese have quite a large collection of musical instruments, all more or less of an interesting character. One of the most important of these is called the King, and was invented by the Emperor Tschun, and is generally supposed to have been in existence for 4,200 years—which is certainly a good old age. You will be able to gather from the accompanying illustration some idea of the size and construction of the King. It consists of sixteen different-sized stones, which are hung in two rows, and the musician strikes the stones with a wooden mallet. A richly ornamented instrument made after the same manner, and called the Nio-King, may only be used by the Emperor.

Another queer-looking musical instrument in use among the Chinese is probably the oldest wind instrument now in use. It bears the strange name of Cheng, is about seventeen inches high, and consists of from thirteen to twenty-one pipes of small bamboo reeds arranged in five different sets. A glance at the illustration will show you how it is played. It was the introduction into Europe of this curious mouth-organ that led to the invention of the accordion and harmonium. The Cheng is the most pleasing of all Chinese instruments, and serves as a standard to tune other instruments.

All kinds of drums are in use in China, for the Chinese believe in plenty of noise; and strange instruments made of stones, like the King, and others made of metal bells hung in wooden frames, and beaten with a mallet, tuned copper plates, wooden clappers, and many kinds of tinkling instruments are among the curious instruments that make up a Chinese orchestra.

I cannot leave this land of strange people, with all their peculiar ideas, without telling you of the Giant Drum, called the Hiuen-Kou, which is said to be more than 3,000 years old, having been invented about 1,100 years before the Christian era, during the reign of the Emperor Tcheou. It is placed on a specially prepared stand, on which it swings to and fro, with a smaller drum on each side. Our illustration shows the performer standing beside the stand, and will give you a good idea of the size of the drum.

THE CHENG.

The Japanese, like their neighbours, the

Chinese, have a great many curious instruments, consisting of drums, bells, and clappers. They possess a strange drum, formed after the

THE GIANT DRUM (*p.* 29).

fashion of an hour-glass, and various bell instruments shaken by the hand, and very much resembling a child's rattle.

The principal national instrument of the Hindoos is the Vina, which you will see from the illustration is a very curious one. It consists of a hollow tube more than three feet in length, curved at one end, and terminating with a fantastic head. It has about eighteen movable bridges placed at short intervals, and seven strings. One peculiar feature of the Vina is that beneath the bar at each end are two hollow gourds, or pumpkins. The Burmese have also a similar instrument to the Vina, but it is usually much smaller and beautifully ornamented.

The Ainos of Yezo and the inhabitants of Central and West Africa have designed some peculiar musical instruments in the shape of harps, many examples of which are to be seen in the British Museum.

The Javanese excel in music, every chief or wealthy man having a *gamelang*, or band of musicians, generally ten or twelve in number. The instruments consist of gongs of various sizes for the deeper tones, and strips of metal or bamboo for the higher notes, arranged in frames, so that a set of each can be conveniently struck by the performer. A curious instrument, called the *Biŏla*, or one-stringed violin, leads the band, which is constantly playing at all festivals. Some of the musical pieces performed are long and elaborate, but all are played by ear, the performers usually practising from childhood. On any grand occasions, such as the wedding of a Rajah's daughter, the *gamelang* will keep on playing at short intervals day and night for several days in succession.

There is an instrument known in the East as the Rebab. It was introduced by the Arabs into Southern Europe as far back as the eighth or ninth century. There are two kinds: one with a single string, and named the "Poet's Rebab," and the other with several strings, called the "Singer's Rebab," from it being used for the accompaniment of song. Our last illustration will show you the character of the "Poet's Rebab," and how it is played by the performer. In the East performers on this instrument visit the cafés, and play and sing whilst their richer brethren lounge and dream over their coffee.

And now I am going to tell you about one of the most wonderful musical instruments ever invented.

In the year 1738 there was exhibited in Paris an instrument in the form of a mechanical flute-player. It stood on a pedestal in which some of the works were contained, and it was so marvellously constructed that the figure not only blew into the flute, but was able

HINDOO PLAYING THE VINA.

to increase or diminish the tones it forced out of the instrument. The originator of this was

Jacques de Vancanson, a man who was already well known for many remarkable inventions. He had long thought over the construction of the flute-player, but had not hitherto been able to put his ideas into execution.

At length, however, he was overtaken by a severe illness, and he took advantage of it to build up his great invention. But he had to take great care that no one should discover the principle of his invention, and thus rob him of his success. So to avoid the chance of this occurring, as he designed each part of the figure he sent it by a faithful servant to be made by a separate workman. As the pieces came home he put them together, and when the whole was quite completed, he crawled out of bed by the assistance of his servant, and locked the door. Trembling with excitement and anxiety, he wound up the works.

THE "POET'S REBAB." (*p.* 30).

At the first note from the flute the servant fell upon his knees awe-stricken.

Then a few moments afterwards the great inventor and his servant, with one impulse, embraced each other and wept with joy at the success of the instrument.

H. Wood Smith.

GEORGE WESTON'S ADVENTURE.

"DON'T look so stupid, Georgie. What do you think of it, I say?"

"I don't feel stupid," said George slowly; "I didn't know I looked it."

"Well, what do you think of it? A capital plan, I say."

The speaker was Jack Smith, and he had just looked in to see a schoolfellow, George Weston. Mrs. Weston kept a little shop, and sold bacon, cheese, mousetraps, tea, sugar, pepper, snuff, tobacco, and many other things.

Jack had crept in through the shop into the little parlour behind, seizing a favourable opportunity when Mrs. Weston's back was turned to search for something unusual required by a troublesome customer. And now he was unfolding the most delightful plan, and there was George sitting as if lost in thought, and by no means interested.

"I say, don't you think it will be fun? It will be just first-rate, I say."

"I don't know," said George slowly; "I can't make up my mind."

"Well, don't sit screwing your eyes up, making 'em look so small. Can't 'ee speak out, man?"

"To-morrow—well," said George, "there's school—and—I don't know."

"'Tis after school, man alive, after school. Do ye wake up a bit!"

"Well then," said George, "mother will expect me back to tea; then there's home lessons."

"Bother it all!" said Jack Smith, "you ain't always bound to come in to tea, are you? My granny does not know where I am half my time. And home lessons! I don't care a farthing for 'em."

"Ah, but," said George, "you don't care about the cane over much, do you?"

"About *that* much!" and Jack snapped his fingers. He was one of those boys occasionally to be met with who are very high and mighty when the schoolmaster's back is turned, but fearful cowards to his face.

"Well but, let's see," said George: "what are these fellows going to do?"

"Rabbiting, I've told you, and they want a boy or two; and if they've good sport, they'll give us each sixpence, and I just about know what to do with a sixpence when I've got it; and we shall have all the fun as well."

"So do I know what to do with sixpence

MAKING UP HIS MIND. (*See p.* 31.)

when I've got it," said George slowly. "But, I say, you've never told me who the fellows are."

"Oh! Bertie Long and Jem Harper, and that lot."

George's eyes opened rather wider.

"I don't care about those sort of fellows. And you said the plantations. Have they got leave? That's Colonel Talbot's land."

"Leave!" and Jack laughed. "They take that pretty quick, I expect."

"Well, but I don't care about it," said George; "the keepers will catch us."

"There ain't any there," was Jack's answer. "Colonel, he ain't at home, and the keepers are never about there. You're afraid, I can see that. A coward!"

"I ain't a coward. But I'm not going to be dragged into a set like that. They're a poaching lot."

"It isn't poaching," said Jack. "And Bertie Long will like my bringing you. He said, 'Bring a boy with some sense in his head'; and I said, 'I'll get George Weston'; and he said 'He'll do finely!'"

"Did he really?" said George, flattered at Bertie Long's approval of him.

"Yes, he did," said Jack. But he did not tell George that Bertie had added—"You'll never get him. His mother won't let him come."

Just at that point Mrs. Weston came in from the shop.

"I thought I heard chattering. But I've been so put about. They're complaining of tea at half-a-crown a pound. I wonder what they do expect? And old Becky West, who bought two ounces, expected me to throw a mousetrap into the bargain. 'A present with a pound of tea' I have heard talk of, but a present with two ounces! Oh, my!" and the good woman lifted up her hands.

Jack had seen the effect of a bit of flattery on George, and he struck while the iron was hot.

"Oh, Mrs. Weston, may George go out with me a bit to-morrow afternoon?"

"If he likes," said Mrs. Weston carelessly.

"But I don't——" began George, and there he stopped. Mrs. Weston was making a tremendous clattering with the fire-irons, and did not notice his feeble protest.

"Good-bye," said Jack; "I can't stop," and he was off before the music of the tongs and shovel had ceased. Now George might have told his mother all. But he was not brave enough for that. "Mother will stop my going," he thought, "if I tell her, and then Jack will laugh at me, and they'll call me a coward." No, he was not brave enough to stand a little laughter and some hard words. "I'd better go," he thought; "and I can keep myself out of mischief." Ah! poor George!

"Now, where's that boy of ours?" Mrs. Smith, Jack's grandmother, was saying about this time; "never in when he's wanted."

"Boys will be boys," piped a shrill quavering voice from the chimney corner, where Jack's grandfather, a little old man, sat huddled up in an arm-chair.

"Oh, don't you talk, John, my man. There's not a bit of sense in anything you do say, and not a morsel in anything you do," observed his amiable wife. "Boys will be boys, and old men will be old men, too. Don't you talk so fast. You've got something to say about everything, you have."

The poor old man had by this time quite subsided, and sat nodding his head drowsily.

"Oh! here's Jack," was Mrs Smith's next exclamation. "Where have you been?"

"Over to George Weston's," said Jack.

"Oh, well," said his grandmother, "I haven't anything to say against him—a quiet, soft sort of lad. His mother, she's making a pretty penny out of all of us. Mary Long told me you were about with Jem Harper and that lot. I don't mind a rabbit or two when I get 'em easy, nor a pheasant if I can come by it nice and quiet, but I won't have no grandson of mine mixed up with that low lot, so I tell you."

Jack's face grew very red, but he only muttered, "Some folks tell lies."

"So they do," said the old woman; "but you've heard what I said, and you'll have to mind me."

The next day George Weston nearly got kept in at school for inattention. He was thinking

of the evening, in a way looking forward to the excitement, but dreading it too very much. Jack was afraid he would slip home after school, and George felt his hand on his sleeve as they went down the steps.

The late autumn evening was closing in when they reached the plantation, and there they found some rough-looking young fellows, one of whom had a dog and a gun. By the time a brace of pheasants as well as some rabbits had found their way into a sack Jem Harper was carrying, George would have given anything to have got away from them. He thought of his mother at home, and of what his dead father would have said to have seen him there, and at last he said to Jack, "I shall go home now."

Jack called out to the men, "I say, this fellow's afraid; he's going home."

"I don't like this," said poor George.

"Now, young fellow," said Bertie Long, turning round and pointing his gun at him, "you stop that. I'll shoot you as soon as I'd shoot a rabbit if you go off. Here you stay, if we stay all night. And if you tell anybody about this piece of work, I'll watch for you, and I'll——"

"I know what you'll do, my fine fellow; I'll just trouble you to come along with me"; and Bertie Long found his gun seized, and before he could offer the slightest resistance two strong keepers had fast hold of him.

His savage look as he spoke to poor George had now changed to one of fright and terror.

The young man who spoke George knew directly. He was Colonel Talbot's son. Poor George felt his disgrace most keenly. What would his mother say? He looked round for Jack, but Jack was off like a shot at the first sound of danger, and Jem Harper was in custody.

But greatly to his surprise and relief, Mr. Talbot laid a hand not unkindly on his shoulder, and said, "I heard all that passed, my boy. We had been warned of this night's work, and came up just before you told them you didn't like it, and meant to go home. Who are you?"

"George Weston, sir."

"Well, George Weston, don't do it again, that's all. It's 'all's well that ends well' in your case. You might have been shot, or locked up to-night, as those fellows will be. Now get home as fast as you can, and keep out of bad company."

"Please, sir, don't tell my mother anything about it."

Mr. Talbot smiled. "I'm afraid I don't know who your mother is, but I strongly advise you to tell her all about it, and if you're a wise boy, you'll do it."

George Weston told his mother everything that night, and though she shed some tears at the time as she thought of the danger he had been in, she was thankful afterwards to see that when tempted to do wrong George had learned the use of the little word "No." W.

THE DOLL THAT TAUGHT A LESSON.

"GOOD-BYE, Annie dear; mind and take good care of Dorrie."

"Yes, mamma."

Ah! Annie, how easy it is to make a promise! A hearty kiss sealed it; then Mrs. Roby drove away in her carriage, and so our story begins.

Mamma gone out to spend the day, Annie left at home to take care of Dorrie, while nurse was cleaning the nurseries. Annie was six, Ralph, her brother, seven, Dorrie four, and the "funniest little puppet in all England," so Ralph said.

"Annie, I *do fink* Mab could walk almost by herself with these boots on," said Dorrie, she and Annie back in the dining-room, Dorrie busy with a family of three dolls, Annie deep in a new story-book.

The wee mamma had just contrived to put a pair of new boots, of Annie's manufacturing, on the by no means elegant feet of shock-headed Mab. Next came the suggestion from silver-tongued Dorrie, as Annie was silent—

"I *fink* Mab and Alice ought to go for a walk. Baby is just gone to sleep"; and the mite was laid carefully among the sofa cushions.

"Very well." Down went the book; with that promise just spoken, Annie could not well do other than go this walk with her little sister, yet in a listless half-hearted way.

'You take the one hand, I the other"; so prattled Dorrie. "Oh! see her feet!" and certainly Miss Mab did trip it out right nimbly down to the gate. How Dorrie laughed, watching her.

Just outside the gate they met Ralph.

"What are you laughing at, old lady?" he asked.

"Because Mab can almost walk by herself," she told him.

"Then she'll be running away one of these days," said the boy.

"Oh! she wouldn't, she wouldn't run away from me, because I love her so"; and Dorrie stooped and gave her a sounding kiss.

"You just wait and see," was Ralph's answer; then he went on, and the sisters pursued their walk.

Back again, then dinner for the children, a long sleep for the dollies, and next the golden afternoon to be lived through and enjoyed.

"Annie!" cried Dorrie, coming down from the nursery, and peering in at the dining-room, where Annie was now reading with a will, deep in the wildest tragedy of the story, where a dog, a gipsy, and a certain Sophia were playing their parts in real story-book fashion. "Annie!" so silvery-tongued Dorrie spoke her name again.

"Well, what?" was the unladylike answer from Annie.

"I *fink* the dollies want to go out in their mail-cart."

"Well, take them."

"But I want you to come."

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"Because I can't; run away."

"Must I go alone?" asked Dorrie sadly.

"Yes, of course you must." And she went.

"'YOU TAKE THE ONE HAND, I THE OTHER.'"

Shock-headed Mab, Alice, and Daisy in the jaunting mail-cart, Dorrie drawing it, playing pony and careful mamma all in one; out at the gate, along the road to the copse; a river came running and babbling along by the road, as one neared the copse. Inside the copse the doves were cooing, squirrels leaping, the cuckoo crying, as the mite went along. What would send her back? Not her baby conscience, for Annie had told her to go all by herself—big, big Annie, ever so big.

At home, the afternoon wore away, tea-time came; nurse ran down from the nursery to the dining-room to fetch her two little charges. Only Annie was there, who started up from her book, like a girl awaking from sleep.

"Why, Miss Annie, I thought Dorrie was here!" cried nurse in surprise.

"No, she—she——" Annie's conscience gave her such a prick.

"She what?" inquired nurse sharply.

"She took the dolls out in the mail-cart, and ——" how Annie bowed her head as conscience

whispered of that promise to her mamma broken; and her poor troubled heart also whispered, "What if something sad was going to happen?"

Well, they sought the child here, there, and everywhere, little dreaming what had happened, what was happening still. At last Ralph started off, by the way of the copse, to look for her, Annie hurried in another direction, and nurse in yet another. Rover went with Ralph—good Rover, who could fetch, carry, and find so much. Oh dear! what a seeking and searching love makes, when even one wee maiden is lost! Ay, lost—not a trace of her could Ralph and Rover find, till they came to the babbling river, and there, on the bank, lay a posy of lilies-of-the-valley, and a knot of ribbon from Dorrie's shoulder; the river babbled out the rest of the story. Poor Ralph! how he cried now!

"PONY AND CAREFUL MAMMA ALL IN ONE" (*p.* 35).

"Dorrie! Dorrie!" he cried, peering down into the shining river, as if fearful of seeing a sun-bonnet and a gleaming of golden hair in its depths. But no; he saw nothing, only the minnows, the water-spiders, and the pebbles.

"Lost! Rover, find!" said he to the dog, showing him Dorrie's shoulder-knot and the flowers.

Rover seemed to understand, for he sniffed at the ground, and then bounded into the river, diving down, and no doubt frightening the fishes as much as he did Ralph. Presently he came out, bringing—ah! what? Mab, dripping, water-bedabbled—a pitiful object indeed. The boy took her in his hand, too alarmed to laugh, though fright and fun almost choked him; then the dog bounded and led the way into the copse, where the doves still cooed, the squirrels leaped, and the cuckoo cried, as if no small maiden was lost, perhaps never to be found again alive. The thought made Ralph shiver.

The river flowed through one corner of the copse; he could see it shining where the sun-beams fell through the tree branches. But Rover did not go that way: he dived away among the trees and undergrowth.

"Dorrie! Dorrie!" cried the little brother.

"Wow-wow-wow!" barked Rover, but at first no response.

Presently, "Wow-wow-wow!" barked Rover again; it was a joyful bark, and Ralph ran to him. There lay poor tired Dorrie fast asleep, the two remaining dolls in the mail-cart smiling and staring at her. But Rover woke her with a pat, Ralph hugged her with such a fond hug; then they started homeward, Ralph taking the mail-cart, with poor wet Mab mounted in disgrace behind, Dorrie clinging to his other hand. They reached home in time to go in with mamma, returned from her visit. Ah! a sad state of things Annie's careless breaking of her promise might have brought about.

"I left my dollies to go into the copse to pick some flowers, and when I came back Mab had run away; then I went into the copse to find her, and couldn't; then I cried and went to sleep, and Rover found me." This was Dorrie's story of herself.

"I will never, never, never break a promise again, mamma!" said penitent Annie.

"Well, mop-headed Mab is a wise old sham if she's taught you that lesson," said Ralph.

But how Mab managed to get into the river was a mystery that was never cleared up.

OUR SUNDAY AFTERNOONS.

MY JEWEL CASKET, AND SOME OF ITS WONDERFUL CONTENTS.

By MAGGIE SYMINGTON, *Author of "From Seed to Blossom," "The King's Command," etc.*

VII.—TREASURES.

TREASURES must be seen in order to be admired, so I am going to try to teach you this afternoon how to see the jewels in my jewel casket.

You remember, I hope, how I told you that, even when the lid was lifted, you might not be able to see the jewels after all. There is only one way in which you can learn to see them. It is not a matter of just opening your eyes and looking; in this case you need the help of what I might, perhaps, call Love's Spectacles.

You know, I am sure, how the use of the microscope has revealed to us a world of tiny living creatures, whose existence was never suspected before the invention of this useful instrument. The microscope did not make this world, but only revealed it: it was in existence all the while, though, for want of the microscope, men knew nothing about it.

There are jewels in the deep hidden places of the earth which men's eyes have never seen, but which will be brought to light some day; their existence is not denied because no one has seen them at present.

So take care, my pets; it will never do to say there are no jewels in the jewel casket, merely because your eyes cannot see them. It is far more reasonable to think there must be something the matter with your eyes if, when you look closely, you do not see them. But I fear that people generally would rather believe in no jewels than in the faultiness of their own sight.

Well, now, this is the point at which we have arrived—the casket has treasures in it, and if our eyes cannot see those treasures, then there is something wrong with our eyes; you may be quite sure of this, and the sooner we get that wrong put right the better. It is said of some idols of old: "Eyes have they, but see not." This is precisely the case with you and me so long as we cannot see the treasures in the casket—we have eyes, but we see not. How, then, are we to be made to see?

But, stay! Let us first ask ourselves, do we want to see? Are we contented to believe there are no treasures in the casket because we cannot see them? If so, there is nothing more to be done. All the powers of this world and the next cannot make us see against our own wills.

But if we are willing and anxious for sight, that is quite another thing. There are not many children, thank God, who would willingly remain blind; they, for the most part, eagerly wish to have their eyes opened. They believe in the existence of so many things they cannot see, that they even take the treasures in the casket on credit. But this will not quite do, either, because this sort of belief is so easily knocked away altogether. We must have a reasonable hope to rest our belief upon, and the most reasonable hope we can have is sight. Christ told Martha to believe, and she should see. But in our case seeing will help us to believe, because we have to see with other eyes than our earthly ones. We need spiritual eyes to see the treasures in the casket. We must have these eyes opened in order to see all spiritual things, such as these treasures in the casket; and spiritual things must be seen spiritually before it is possible to believe in them. In this sense seeing is believing, but not in any other. You may see a good many things with your earthly eyes, and not believe in one of them; but you cannot see anything with your spiritual eyes without believing in it. The people who believe least are those whose spiritual eyes are shut, or nearly so: these, however, as I said before, are not little children.

Now, what I want you to do is to lift these spiritual eyes of yours, which are already open,

remember, and fix them upon Jesus Christ. See Him, believe in Him, and then you will catch the radiance of His crown jewels flashing out living light from my jewel casket. You cannot see them without His help—remember that—because the eyes of your spirit need to be filled with light from Him before even they can see the things which belong to Him. This is the one and only way of seeing the treasures I want you to see. Unless you will indeed lift those eyes of your spirit, it is impossible for Christ to be their light. Will you not fix your eyes upon Him, and see?

Once upon a time, in quite a humble cottage, there lived a husband, a wife, and two little children. The wife had to work very hard indeed just at the time I am going to tell you of, because her husband had met with an accident by which he had lost the use of his right arm, and so could not work. It was a time of great trial to them all, but especially to the man, I think. He was one who had always tried to do his duty, although he thought he could very well do this without any help from Jesus. He was a just man, but not a loving or lovable one, and he worried himself a great deal over his enforced idleness, so that his temper suffered accordingly.

"We have at least three things that we ought to be very thankful for," his wife said to him one day.

"Indeed!" he said bitterly; "and what are they?"

"Health, life, and food." Her eyes rested on the children as she spoke. They were ruddy with health, their limbs were full of life, and the appetites they brought to table every day had always as yet found enough to satisfy them.

Their father felt no more interest in the children than if they did not belong to him. What was it to him that their cheeks were ruddy with health, their eyes bright, their appetites good? The very things which made the mother's heart rejoice in spite of her cares were an offence to the father. Can you guess why? Every day, and all day long, the mother worked with those spiritual eyes of hers fixed firmly on Jesus, and He filled them with light, and her heart with love. Ah, what a difference that made! You can, I feel sure, understand how keen the children were to feel this difference. When father was at home they were afraid to laugh and chatter as they did by the hour together when only mother was by. Their merry prattle was the music to which she worked, and it always drew smiles from her; but father would silence them at once: their childish voices had no music in his ears. His gruff, "Come, stop that row!" had never needed to be repeated. They stopped their play at the sound of his footstep. Poor little souls!

He had never been really unkind to them, but they were quick to find out the want of love in his heart. The heart of a child is a curious thing: it is quick to respond when love touches it, but it shrinks like a sensitive plant under an indifferent hand. Their mother tried to get them to pity him, but—well, you know, although there is nothing too hard for love to accomplish, fear is a coward, and afraid to make an effort. Children need nothing so much as love, and, if its sunshine does not brighten their little lives, their hearts are like closely-folded buds that never open.

Their father thought all they needed was food and clothes. Many really good people make the same mistake—some of those who build schools, and orphanages, and those sort of things, and think they have provided splendidly for the wretched little objects of their bounty, whose hearts remain as buds that never get a chance to expand into flowers. The first questions which occur to big people are, "What shall we eat? And wherewithal shall we be clothed?" With little children the first thought is to be loved, and then to be clothed and fed.

The hearts of the little children I am telling you about opened out naturally to their mother: she gained all their sweet confidences. She read their little minds as if they were an open book. She knew every virtue they had, and every little fault also. The love Jesus put into her heart gave her full understanding. The father, on the contrary, was a complete stranger to the hearts of his children. He had no idea of all the lovely things hidden from his sight which those little hearts contained; were he told about them, he would not have believed in them.

Now, unless you do as I have told you, and

keep your eyes steadily lifted to the face of our dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, you will be like the father of these children : you will see none of the treasures in my jewel casket. But fix your eyes on Christ Jesus, as the mother did, and the treasures of the casket will reveal themselves to you. You will look for them through Love's Spectacles, and these spectacles are such beautifiers, such truly magical discoverers of unsuspected treasures that they will open for you a world far more wonderful even than that which is revealed by the microscope.

BY THE DEEP SEA.

AMID the wave-beat rocks the children play,
Their white feet sparkle in the foamy spray:
O shining sea, till sinks the happy day,
The children seek thy side.

Until the golden cloudless hours be done,
To cull thy shells the lads and lassies run;
They laugh to see thee dimple in the sun,
And spread thine arms so wide.

They watch the sails that bird-like fly away
Across the rippling waters of the bay;
For harvest of the sea the fishers stray
Far out across the tide.

And when the boats come home with silver store,
The little footsteps gather to the shore:
O sunlit sea, thy charms seem never o'er—
What joys around thee hide!

Behold the stately castles, firm and tall,
Reared up in sand by willing hands so small,
At morn, at noon, still busy one and all,
To raise those halls of pride!

O glorious sea, ring out in deathless lay,
What though the bairnies' castles fall away,
The children have a Dwelling-place for aye—
God's love doth strong abide.

M. S. Haycraft.

BIBLE EXERCISES.

1. Where does Jesus say that He is both Master and Lord?

2. Where do we read of organs in the Bible?

3. To what High Priest did God send a messenger, saying that He would honour those that honoured Him, but would lightly esteem those that despised Him?

4. Where does Solomon tell us that the one that is patient in spirit is better than the one that is proud in spirit?

5. Where does Jesus call Himself the Bright and Morning Star?

6. Where does the prophet Nahum say that the Lord is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and that He knows those that trust in Him?

7. Where in the Bible do we read of a little baby being found crying?

8. Where does the Apostle St. Paul assure us that nothing at all can separate us from the love of God?

9. Where does Jesus Christ tell us that though once dead, He is alive for evermore?

10. By which of the prophets does God say that, from the rising to the going down of the sun, His name shall be great amongst the Gentiles?

11. Where does the Psalmist say that he is a companion of all those that fear God?

12. Where are we told that those who honour God have mercy on the poor?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE EXERCISES.—61—72. (*See Vol. XXXIII., p.* 404.)

61. In Ps. lxxviii. 39; Job vii. 7. 62. In Job vii. 17, 18. 63. In Ps. lxxviii. 4—7. 64. In Ps. cxx. 2. 65. Jeremiah (chap. xxxiii. 1—3). 66. By Jeremiah (chap. xxx. 11). 67. In Zeph. iii. 17. 68. Isaiah (chap. v. 20). 69. In Prov. xxviii. 27. 70. In Prov. xxix. 7. 71. In Prov. xxix. 6. 72. In Prov. xxviii. 5.

POSTMEN OF THE AIR. (*See p.* 41.)

POSTMEN OF THE AIR.

POSTMEN of the snowy wings,
Here are letters you must carry:
Through my heart the message rings—
Fly, dear birds, and do not tarry!

Carrier pigeons, fly away!
It is love that you must carry,
Love to cheer the dullest day:
Fly away and do not tarry.

Love will make the burden light
That the weary heart must carry—
Love is needed day and night:
Fly away and do not tarry!

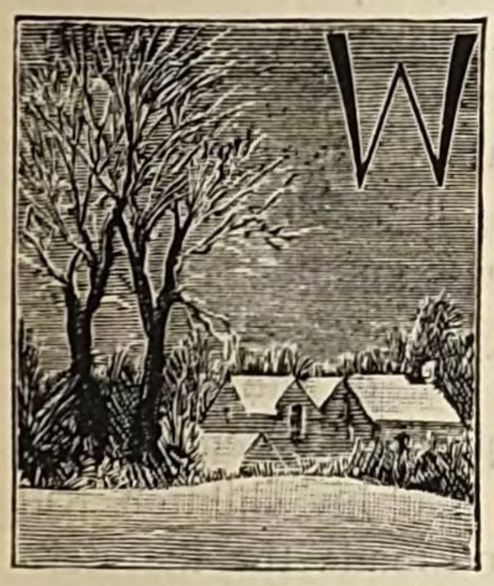
Noah found the gentle dove
Messages of peace could carry:
Fly, then, bearing peace and love—
Faithful hearts for you will tarry.

Love is patient, wise, and strong,
Love no idle tales will carry,
Beareth much and beareth long,
Does not doubt though time should tarry.

Birds of love, then, fearless fly!
(Who the peaceful dove would harry?)
"Love is life and cannot die,"
Is the message you must carry. A. M.

STORIES OF THE UNEXPECTED.

I.—THE MEDDLESOME CHILDREN AND THE WILLING SON.



WE were all snowed up! A large party of us, big and little, had met at Petherton Lodge to celebrate our favourite uncle's birthday. Petherton is only about forty miles from London, and Uncle George thinks nothing of going up to the City once or twice a week, and yet here we were on the 10th of March, 1891, snowed up at the Lodge and just as unable to get back to our houses as if we had been at the North Pole instead of in Sussex.

"A merry Christmas to you all," said Uncle George as he entered the dining-room on that famous Tuesday morning; and we greeted him with shouts of "Many happy returns!"

"No letters, uncle," said my brother Charlie, who was the eldest of the youngsters.

"Plenty of parcels though," said uncle cheerily, glancing at the little pile of presents near his plate. "I say, children, it's to be hoped that cook has laid in a good stock of provisions, for it strikes me we are going to be in a state of siege. What do you think, Aunt Mary? Is there enough to feed all this regiment, or must we turn them out to quarter themselves on the tree tops? for they couldn't find their way to the village."

"Oh! it's lovely, uncle," said Cousin Minnie, buttering a piece of hot toast; "we can't get to the station for a week, I'm sure; you will have to keep us here."

None of us young ones cared about the snowstorm much, but we all looked grave later on in the day, when news came of trains blocked in the snow and of poor men in carts being found almost dead with cold. The news was brought by the postman, who delivered the morning letters about five o'clock in the afternoon.

We spent a merry day in spite of snow-drifts and winds which seemed to pierce through every hole and corner. There were about twenty of us altogether, and as our parents were with us we had no anxiety about them. Telegrams were given to the postman, with instructions to send them off to our homes as soon as the wires were in working order again, and we made up our minds to be as happy as we could.

A glorious starlight night followed the snowy day, and those of us who were not afraid of the cold went into uncle's little observatory to have a peep at the stars through his big telescope. The observatory was quite a small room, walled

with glass, which looked rather like a monster cocked hat popped on the roof of the Lodge. As you may imagine, it was fearfully cold that night, and the most enthusiastic star-gazer soon had enough, and was glad to return to the blazing wood fire which Uncle George always had in the drawing-room.

The next day, Wednesday, the snow was thicker than ever, and we were still prisoners, though very happy ones. We played games and told tales till we were tired, and when evening came again we were all heartily glad to hear Uncle George say—

"Now then, children, I have thought of a new game. Who likes tableaux vivants?"

Of course we all did.

"And who likes fairy stories? Not silly fairy tales that never could be true, but true ones which are so strange and wonderful that they seem to be fairy tales. Who likes that sort of fairy tale?"

Of course we all did.

"Very well, then you shall take it in turns to do the tableaux, which shall represent what may truly be called 'Stories of the Unexpected,' and I will tell the tales; only you must help me prepare the picture-frame first."

There were plenty of us as you know, and, with the servants to help, we soon had curtains put across the middle of the double drawing-room. All the boxes we could find were brought down, and planks were laid upon them; two or three doors were even taken off their hinges and helped to form a stage. The whole was covered over with rugs and shawls, and then the audience took their seats on the other side of the curtains.

A gong sounding presently, the curtains were withdrawn, and we saw the first picture.

What a muddle there was! Pieces of glass lay about, some on the floor, some on the wooden table. Spectacle frames without any glasses, small tools, and many odds and ends, showed us that the man who sat fixing some glasses into a frame was a busy man—so busy that he had not time to keep his children out of mischief. Three of them were kneeling by the door of the shop, and holding pieces of glass in their hands, looking through them towards the street. On the wall was a ticket in Uncle George's largest writing, "Hans Lippershey—Middelberg, 1608." No wonder the children looked like little Dutch dolls, or old men and women cut shorter.

"Once upon a time," said a voice, "there was a hard-working man who made spectacles. He lived in Holland, and his children were very fond of running in and out of his shop and playing with the broken pieces of glass or wire which lay about. One day the children were playing just as you see them now, holding the glasses in different positions. Hans had his back to them, and was so busy that he had almost forgotten they were there, when suddenly they cried, 'Come, father, quick!'"

Down went the curtain just at the most interesting point, but it was up again in a second, and Hans Lippershey was bending down to peep through the glasses too.

"'Come quick, father, or it will run away again perhaps! Look how near the church steeple has come!' Hans jumped off his stool, and looked through the glasses. He started, for it really was true that the steeple seemed as if he could touch it, it was so close to his eye."

"The telescope!" we all exclaimed, turning the tableaux vivants into a charade which we were expected to guess.

"Yes, that is the fairy tale of the telescope. Hans took care to keep the different glasses just in the same position that his children had put them by accident, and made the first telescope, which he presented to Prince Maurice of Nassau. Like many other first inventions, it was rather clumsy. Galileo heard of it, saw it, and made a better one, and then invited the Doge of Venice and all the grandees to come and look through it. They were so surprised that they could hardly speak, but they little thought that the marvellous instrument was really found out by some Dutch children."

We all cried "Bravo!" and then those of us who were wanted, hurried off to take our turn at the tableaux.

The next scene was rather a comic one. Cousin Minnie, dressed as an old woman, was standing looking at my brother Charlie. She was evidently in a great hurry; a dirty collar and two or three handkerchiefs were in one

hand, and with the other she pointed to a little pile of clothes on the floor. Charlie, with a linen apron and shirt sleeves, was running his fingers through his hair in puzzled distress, which made us all laugh.

"You should pity that young man," said Uncle George in gloomy tones, making us laugh still louder. "His mother is in a hurry. There is a woman downstairs waiting to take the linen to the wash, and Mrs. Senefelder wants her son to write the list for her. That young man is quite ready to do what his mother asks him, but he hasn't a scrap of paper or a drop of ink left."

The curtain fell here, and Uncle George went on—

"Whilst they are trying to find their way out of the difficulty, I will tell you something more about Aloys Senefelder. He is a clever sort of young fellow, fond of music and painting, but he likes writing poetry and plays best of all. He writes such a lot that the printers do not care to print them all. One day he made up his mind he would turn printer; and, having bought a few type-letters, he made up some stuff for stereotyping it. After a little while he tried experiments with copper plates, but he was so poor that he could not pay for what he wanted, and the coppersmith refused to let him have any more.

"Now Aloys was a persevering fellow as well as a clever one, and he made up his mind to make the plates do double or treble duty, by rubbing off the engravings with a stone. Of course the plates wore out in time, just as a pair of shoes do, and then he thought of engraving on the stone itself. He had just managed to polish one nicely, and prepared it to practise writing backwards on—for you know it all had to be done in topsy-turvy fashion—when his mother came to ask him to write a washing bill for her; and poor Aloys was fairly puzzled as to how he could do it without paper or ink. Now you shall see the result."

The curtain rose; Aloys was writing on the piece of stone, and his mother was contentedly walking off with the bundle of clothes.

"Trying to help his mother, Aloys has helped himself, and has made a great discovery. He wrote the list on the stone with some ink he had made of lamp-black, soap, and wax, meaning to copy it later on when he could get ordinary writing materials. He was going to rub off the list, when the thought suddenly struck him that he would like to see what would be the result if he were to cut those letters into the stone by using aqua-fortis. He tried directly; the 'strong water' cut down about the hundredth part of an inch. Aloys filled in the space with printing ink, and took off several impressions.

"And that is the story of lithographing or writing on stone. Good night, persevering Aloys Senefelder."

E. M. Waterworth.

IN THE TWILIGHT HOUR.

JUST when the sun sinks down in the west
Is the golden hour we all love best,
When we hush our laughter and merry glee,
And gather around our mother's knee.

And she tells us tales of the long ago,
When she was little, like us, you know,
Of the quaint old games that she used to play
In the wonderful time so far away.

Tommy with curls of a golden hue,
Nell with her laughing eyes of blue,
Sweet little Joan with her earnest gaze,
And baby dear with her winning ways—
Crowd in the dusk round our mother's chair,
And the Angel of Peace seems to touch them there,
While the setting sun, with his lingering light,
Kisses us all a warm "Good night."

And when on the pillow each sleepy head,
After the evening prayer is said,
The last sweet thought is the mystic bliss
Of the children's hour and the mother's kiss.

Constance Morgan.

PLAY IS NOT ALWAYS PLAY.

A FAIRY STORY IN SIMPLE WORDS.

OTTO was always grumbling. It was his work to look after some lambs, and he did not like it, for he had to stay in the same field all day.

"I wish I could get away and have some play,
I don't like staying here all day,"

said Otto. And this he was always saying.

One day he had said these words over ten times without stopping, and was going to say them again when he heard a little voice say—

"Otto, Otto, come with me,
Funny things you then shall see."

And looking round, he saw a queer little girl and some geese—so many geese that he could not count them.

"How did you get here?" said Otto.

"Boo!" said the little girl, and then all the geese said "Boo!" also. And this made Otto very angry, for the geese had turned their heads and were looking at him. So he took up a long stick and poked at the goose nearest to him. No sooner had he done this than he felt that he was beginning to run along faster than he had ever run before; he could not stop: it seemed as if he must go after the geese.

"HE COULD NOT STOP."

The little girl trotted along by his side, saying—

"Is not this fun? We gallop away;
Are you not having a happy day?"

"I don't know," said Otto, quite out of breath. "Can't we stop to rest?"

"Boo!" said the little girl; and the geese all turned their heads round and said "Boo!" also.

"Coo, coo, coo!" cried some other voices; and behold, flying along in the air were numbers of pigeons, and they too turned their heads and said to Otto—

"Coo, coo, is not this play,
Better than minding the lambs all day?"

"I don't know," said Otto; "I should like to stop and rest."

"Moo, moo, moo!" said some gruff voices, and to Otto's surprise there was now a long train of cows galloping along with the geese.

"Oh, stop! stop!" said Otto; but the cows turned their heads and said "Moo, moo!" and the geese said "Boo, boo!" and the pigeons said "Coo, coo!"

What a noise they made, and they went along faster than ever. The little girl still trotted at the side, and she said—

"Isn't this fun? We gallop away;
Are we not having a happy day?"

But Otto was too much out of breath to speak.

"Pooh, pooh, pooh!" exclaimed a farmer with a great stick in his hand. "Is everyone going mad? Who are you, little boy? and what are you doing, Lotty?" said he to the little girl.

And Lotty spoke—

"The boy is Otto; he grumbles all day
Because he never can get away.
So I'm teaching him that play is not always play,
And it's better at home with his work to stay."

"Is it?" asked the farmer. "What do you think, Otto?"

"I should like to go back to the lambs," said Otto; "it is not such hard work as this."

The farmer laughed.

"Take him home, Lotty," said he.

So Otto went home, and never grumbled again.

G.

TO SCHOOL AND AWAY.

By H. ATTERIDGE, *Author of "Bunty and the Boys," "Uncle Silvio's Secret," &c.*

CHAPTER I.—THE PROMISE OF A PONY.

GOING away to school for the first time! Does not it make your heart beat, only to think of it?

Gerald was to go to Applewich Court, such a jolly school in the country—or so he had heard. Edith and Fluffy were to be sent to Miss Skeffington's at Brighton, where they were to learn Latin, French, and German, dancing and algebra, embroidery and china-painting, and everything that ends in "ology"; but we cannot count up all the branches taught at Miss Skeffington's, or our heads would begin to turn round and round with the mere mention of so much learning.

Edith was fourteen, tall and graceful, with fair hair hanging down to her waist. Gerald loved to jerk it; he said it was like a pony's tail, and Gerald was what the girls called "mad on ponies." But we are not going to talk about him just yet; he was a thoughtless boy, and we need not attend to him. We were talking about Edith, was not it? Well, she was delighted to have her new dresses fitted on, and to get her mother's presents, the work-box, the writing-case, the silver pencil, the little gold watch. And while her trunk was being packed with everything new, she stood so straight that she might have been the great Miss Skeffington's model for deportment; and she shook back her fair hair with a whisk that would have done honour to any pony proud of his tail.

Fluffy was ten. Her hair went the other way: that means, it stood up. She was a sturdy little thing, given to cricket, and marbles, and climbing trees. She folded her round arms behind her, and stood, with wild hair and a dirty pinafore, to watch the packing of the trunks.

"I wish I was a boy," she said. "I am sure it would be a lot jollier to go to Applepie Court."

"*A lot jollier!*" repeated Edith, with severe reproach. "How *can* you talk like that? And it isn't Applepie Court, you little goose!"

"It is," argued Fluffy.

"Hush, Miss Fluffy! don't contradict!" said nurse, kneeling by the trunk, and trying to get the shoes to fit in a corner.

"Well, it is Apple something," said Fluffy; "and it sounds awfully good."

And she turned away at once, swinging round on her heel, and going out of the room with three jumps. Four more of the Brierly children were out in the garden, and she wanted to get down to them. So she went sliding down the banisters and ran out into the sunshine.

It was not a very big garden, but it was big enough to go all round the snug red-brick house, and to have hedges, and trees, and gooseberry bushes, and plenty of sweet-scented pinks, and carnations, and stocks, and a nice little green lawn near the path to the gate. On this smooth square of grass the four children were clustered round a little Italian beggar girl with a monkey in her arms.

There were the twins, five years old, in sailor-blue dress, the funniest little things you could imagine, with very blue eyes wide open, and short crops of fair hair. They kept at a respectful distance from the monkey. So did Ali Baba, who was just able to walk and stare. Another little girl was older than the two in sailor frocks. She was Jess, an eight-year-old copy of Edith, straight and slim, with another pony-tail of fair hair down to her waist. And this child had the courage to bring in the poor little Italian, and to get her a large piece of bread-and-butter, because she looked so sad and hungry.

The little stranger was about Fluffy's age, her hair curling about her dark face, and her large eyes sunken, and her cheeks and mouth pinched and thin. She wore a red skirt and an old black velvet bodice, laced with yellow ribbon up the front. The kerchief round her neck was very white, and so were her big loose sleeves—just like Gerald's shirt-sleeves, Fluffy thought. She had a blue bead necklace and gold earrings,

and a piece of white muslin was pinned on her head and hung over the back of her hair. The monkey clung to her shoulder with his hairy hands. She called him Toto, and said her name was Gemma, and she had walked all the way from town—see her broken shoes, and her foot cut to prove that it was true; and "Oh! little ladies—hungry—hungry!"

This was why Jess got her the bread-and-butter; the monkey helped himself to part of it.

"How much will you sell the monkey for?" cried Fluffy, feeling in her pocket, which was so stuffed that she could find nothing in it but peg-tops, and handkerchiefs rolled tight.

"*Non posso*, I cannot." Gemma drew back. "Toto belongs to *him*. I bring monkey and money to *him*."

She said "*him*" with fear, in a whisper.

The mother of the Brierly children came out just in time to hear the frightened little voice.

"Poor child!" she said. "It is the old story: she is sent out to beg. Who sends you out?"

Gemma stood as if she could not speak. Little by little she backed towards the gate, and her pinched face quivered, and the children saw that she was crying. She would answer nothing but thanks in her own language, and "I will go away. He told me not stay, but to show the monkey."

So she shrank away, and ran the moment she slipped out at the gate. The children soon forgot her; they were only sorry the monkey was gone. But their mother was sorry for the child, made a beggar against her will.

Even the monkey was not talked of long; the going away to school was the one topic among the children—except, perhaps, the coming of the new governess next week. The last had gone away to be married, and had sent them so much bride-cake, that they all felt as if they could eat no more sweets for a month. And what a houseful they were! It *was* time for the eldest to go away to school.

Besides, Gerald was getting into idle habits, having only to go to his tutor for a few hours every day; and he was always wishing to be among other boys. The Joneses were very nice, and they had lots of friends and a cricket-club; but the Joneses had left the neighbourhood. And as for Victor Maine, Gerald's father did not seem to like him. So there were no companions for the boy, and you may think how glad he was to pack for Applewich Court, though sometimes he understood what leaving home meant—thought of it as he fell asleep at night, and knew that he would not be there for years again, except in holiday-time, and felt that there was a sad side to it all, for he loved his father and mother and his home, as every boy should.

He had no brother except the baby. Gerald had a contempt for all the babies in the world, except Ali Baba. Much as he loved him, he had given him that shocking thievish name. And even Ali Baba had his drawbacks. There were long hours in the day when nobody was allowed to make a noise. "Whisht!" nurse would call over the banister; and mother would whisper, "No, no, children: you must not wake the baby," just when Gerald was setting all the others on to play hunting buffaloes up and down the stairs. Oh yes; it was certainly time to go to school; and this was Friday, and the trunks were packed; and Gerald was to be off by the first train on Monday, and the girls were to go on Tuesday.

"Won't it be lovely where there are no boys!" Edith often sighed during those days.

To which Master Gerald would answer—

"Oh! won't it, though? So nice, and stiff, and prim! Wouldn't I like to see you all walking out two and two, like this!" And he stiffened himself like a poker, and walked on his toes, with his eyes cast down and his hands together.

If only Gerald could have known! Known what? Oh! never mind; you will come to it in time. He said he would like to meet them all going out two and two, you know.

On Saturday morning, when his father was going as usual to town, Gerald walked with him to the station, and they had a serious talk on the road. We need not repeat his father's wise advice about doing his best at school, whether in study or play. The boy was quite happy about going to Applewich Court; he meant to make a new beginning, to work hard, and to enjoy his school life.

"Now," his father said, as they walked along, "I have been thinking how to add pleasure to your holidays. What would you think of

having a pony when you come home at Christmas?"

Gerald jumped for joy. A pony of his own! It was beyond the wildest of his dreams. Was there ever such an indulgent father in the world? The impulsive boy wanted to get leave at once to tell Tipkins, the handy man, to clear his firewood and tools out of the old stable.

His father laughed.

"That is just your way, Gerald: you want to do everything at random the minute you think of it. The pony will be yours at Christmas, *if you deserve to get it;* mind, it is not certain: it depends on what you do at school. But is not it too soon, my lad, to set Tipkins to work at the beginning of September to get ready the stable for the pony that is coming on Christmas Eve?"

Yes, Gerald admitted, it *was* too soon. But he was comforted for the delay by being told about the pony. It was a beautiful grey one, very dark grey, with a black mane and tail, and it was called Sweep. And Mr. Haines at the livery stables had already agreed to keep it unsold till Christmas, as it was very wild yet, and was only under training.

Gerald walked along in rapture to the station. The last word as his father stepped into the train was—

"Thank you *awfully!* Can we go and see the pony to-night?"

Then he began to go home alone, smiling, glowing, treading on air, wishing everyone in the world knew about that pony. What a pity he could not tell the Joneses: they were gone. What a surprise it would be when he would tell the girls! And above all, what would Victor Maine think when he would see him riding in the holidays on the grey pony? Victor Maine had only a bicycle. Why, a bicycle was nothing to a pony. Whoever heard of a bicycle coming at its master's call, or flinging a stranger off, as the dear grey pony would be sure to do when it would be Gerald's own?

He hurried along the middle of the road, holding his head high, and proudly thinking of himself mounted on Sweep and riding over all the country at will—riding, not on a jog-trot donkey, or for a shilling an hour, but as long as he liked on his own steed.

Ting, ting, ting! sounded behind him. He stepped out of the way of a bicycle rider.

"Halloa!" Victor Maine called to him.

"Halloa!" said Gerald.

It was their way of saying, "How do you do?" Victor Maine came wheeling back, and slipped down off his bicycle. Gerald looked at the machine with some contempt, and began—

"I say, do you know what?"

Of course the reader *knows what.* Well, out it came all at once.

"My father says I am going to have a pony of my own to ride."

"Whew!" whistled Victor in surprise. "Hope you'll stick on him! I knew a young fellow in Paris, and he had his collar-bone broken in the Bois de Boulogne. And there was Harry Slapjack, the son of Sir Richard's jockey too, he has to go all his life on one leg and a stump. That was through going on a pony when he didn't know how."

"I'll stick on, never fear!" said Gerald, though for a moment he felt a shock like a dash of cold water. "Mine is a beautiful grey pony—dark grey."

"That was a grey pony that left Slapjack on one leg and a stump," said Victor promptly. "Ponies are wicked—particularly grey ones. Never mind, old fellow. Come along, and let's see yours."

Gerald felt uncomfortable when he had to explain. "I have not got him yet. I ought to have said he is going to be a beautiful grey one."

"Oh! is that all?" said Victor. "I understand: he is at present in the mare's nest."

This puzzled Gerald: it sounded like a joke at him. He did not happen to know yet that a mare's nest means something very out-of-the-way, and, in fact, wildly impossible.

Presently Victor said to the crestfallen boy—

"What's all this about ponies? I thought you were going off to school."

"So I am," said Gerald, "on Monday."

Victor Maine looked at him in pity, shook his head, and heaved a sigh.

"Why, what's the matter?" from Gerald.

"Oh! nothing," said the other, lightly. "Only I am always sorry for a green chap like you."

"Green! Look here!" cried Gerald, firing up. "What did you call me green for? I'll pitch you into the ditch."

The threat made Victor Maine burst out laughing.

"Very good! Go it, little chap! You are a regular gamecock. Perhaps you won't do so badly, after all."

"What on earth did you mean by calling me green?" Gerald asked fiercely.

"Well, just this: when a fellow has never been away from home, and looks jolly glad about going to school, one wishes he could know what's before him—that's all."

Gerald cooled down, because he became interested and curious.

"You know all about it, don't you?" he said. "Tell me."

Then the bicycle was wheeled along the road; the two boys walked beside it, and the elder boy, Victor, began to instruct the other out of his large experience.

He was a very fine fellow in Gerald's eyes—thirteen and a half—and his airs and his neck-ties were those of a dandy. He had been on visits to Paris, and he went into London whenever he liked. He was his grandfather's heir, at the old lodge in the village, the long white house with the oak-colour shutters and the poplars outside. He boasted that he always did what he liked; and he pretended he was fourteen, though the Jones's sisters, who knew everybody's age, had told Gerald he wasn't. Well, Victor tried to look tall, though he was only an inch bigger than Gerald, and he went to town with a top hat on, and kid gloves, and a cane.

This morning he wore a tweed cycling suit and cap, with the whole effect finished off by a light silk scarf and a pair of strong but elegant shoes. Gerald thought he looked a gentleman and a hero. His olive face and dark locks were quite different from all the fair family of the Brierlys; and the cycling suit showed off a shapely pair of legs, which reminded Gerald vaguely of princes, brigands, and other distinguished persons. Then think of his knowledge of the world! He had been to four different schools; and it did not make his experience less valuable if he had only been a short time at each, and had come home suddenly.

Once when Gerald asked him the reason of so many changes, he had curled his lip, and said with supreme contempt: "It was the mutton."

This explanation might not have satisfied an older person. But Gerald had always an admiration for Victor Maine, and he thought that such a splendid and noble young man had a right to object to being fed upon inferior mutton.

Poor Gerald! As he walked beside the bicycle, his heart became troubled with a sense of doing wrong. His friend was not his father's friend.

"Vic," he said, stopping, "I forgot; I must be off. Good-bye!"

"What's that for? Why, I am going the same way," said the other; and Gerald felt that he was caught.

Walking on, he tried to quiet his troubled mind by thinking that they could not really be companions if he was going away on Monday—that he could not help it—that he only wanted to hear about school. So despite the pricking of his conscience, he walked with Victor beside the bicycle.

Little did he dream that Victor Maine had a twinkle of mischief in his eye.

"I won't tell you much about school," he said, "because--because—it would make your flesh creep."

CHAPTER II.—"CRAMMING" GERALD.

"WHERE are you going to?"

"Applewich Court."

"Where is that?"

"Don't know. Somewhere in Surrey. Father knows. But it's a jolly place."

"Oh!—Applewich Court," from Victor, who was thinking hard, as if trying to remember.

"Is that the school where the boys are *whopped* for everything—just to make 'em hardy? I should think it *is:* Applewich Court."

"The boys are what?" Gerald asked in horror.

"I said *whopped.* They get used to it if they are any good, and if they are not--why, the life is nearly whopped out of them."

TWO LITTLE STRANGERS. (*See p.* 45.)

Gerald looked aghast. Victor bit his lip, to keep from laughing.

"That can't be Applewich Court," said poor Gerald, when he had breath to speak. "Father would never send me to a place like that."

"The fathers don't know," said Victor readily. "All the boxing and knuckle-knocking are not on the prospectus: they don't make it an extra. What did my grandfather know when he sent me to Scodmore, where we lived upon nothing but india-rubber pudding?"

"India-rubber what?" from Gerald.

"Pudding—I don't mean to say," the experienced boy went on, "that it was really made of india-rubber; but it was just like trying to get one's teeth into a piece of it."

"I could do without pudding," said Gerald bravely. "Men don't want sweetstuff. Father never takes any."

"Oh! but you will have to take what you get—every bit—no more and no less," Victor told him. "If you can't eat the mutton, put it in your pocket when the usher isn't looking."

Gerald stared and smiled. What a horrible greasy idea! And would not he be as hungry as ever, even if his pocket was full of chops?

His instructor went on to tell him that he would be "teased to death" when he was a new boy. "The first night, as soon as the gas is out, the other fellows will pull you out of bed, and toss you in a blanket right up against the ceiling."

"I don't care," said Gerald, with some pluck. "It can't feel very unlike going high in our swing."

"Oh! doesn't it, though?" from Victor. "That's all *you* know. Mind you put your hands up, or your head will go bang through the ceiling—that's all! After that, they blacken your face and put you to bed."

Gerald began to look miserable.

"Well, I'll tell you what to do the first night, and you will escape it all," said his adviser. "As soon as the gas goes out, just you creep out of bed, and crawl along under the other beds, and keep quiet all night under the farthest one in the corner."

"Why," said Gerald, "I'd be as cold as a stone. They may toss me. I shan't be a coward."

"All right'" said Victor Maine in his easy-going way. "The fellows there would think you sharp if you escaped their tricks. And I warn you, don't bear too much from them. If they think you are a muff, you will have an awful time of it. Don't be quiet; or there you will be—the masters will thrash you, and the boys will tease you, and the mutton will choke you, and the stickjaw pudding will take your teeth out."

It was a lively prospect. Gerald's happy dream of school-life was changing and melting away. He began to think it would want a good deal of pluck to go to his fate with resignation.

"Anyhow, we shall have games," he said. "There is a cricket-ground. There is a gymnasium too."

"Every school has a muddy playground," Victor explained. "And this is what happens: if you don't play the games well, the big fellows—the heads of the sides, you know—have leave to thrash you to teach you to play up. Then if you do play up, the ball goes over the wall into the glass-houses; and then you are sent for to the study, to get a lecture, or a licking—one is as bad as the other. Take my advice, and if ever you are sent for to come to the study, don't! Anything rather! Go up the chimney, bury yourself in the coal-cellar, but don't be enticed into the study when the old gentleman is angry. I know it, Gerald; I have been at four schools. My impression is that it can all be described in half-a-dozen words—learning, lectures, licking, mutton, and india-rubber pudding."

Sometimes Gerald laughed; sometimes he turned cold, and felt that he was pale.

"I am not afraid," he said; "but what's the best thing for a new fellow to do?"

"Be free and easy, a bit wild," said the other, "and the boys will think you a trump. You see, it is like this: the masters are down upon the boys for everything, and they expect to be dodged, and the boy that is clever and funny, and does not mind a scrape or two, soon gets to be the cock of the school."

This was quite a new view, and quite a false and untrue one. But Gerald did not know that Victor Maine was only leading him into trouble, and that this talk on the road was the beginning of great misery by-and-by.

"What could I do to be funny?" he said

simply. "I'd like to begin by being thought a trump."

"Funny? Lots of things!" said his adviser. "Notice which of the masters is fond of a joke; and when he is in charge, come into the school-room on your head."

"Would that do?" laughed Gerald. "Would not he be angry?"

"Oh! not at all. You see, if he has a sense of humour, he must laugh at the calmness of a boy doing such a thing; and if he laughs, he can't say anything to you."

They turned the corner in sight of the long white house, with its poplars—the Old Lodge—Victor's home. Gerald asked him to be quick, and suggest something "a little milder," that he might be a favourite with the boys.

"I'll put you up to another thing," said his friend obligingly. "Find out where the store-room is; and if they keep a barrel of flour, you might stir the treacle and currants into it. After that, everybody will have cake instead of bread for a whole month. They can't get the treacle and the currants out again. The boys will bless you for that."

"What a jolly idea!" said Gerald, in great glee. "I'll do that. Tell me something else."

"There's a very neat thing to be done by filling the master's desk with flies," said the adviser.

"Oh no!" from Gerald. "That sounds too bad."

"Then I won't tell you, you young muff!"

"I'm not a muff. But I don't like that trick. It would be so disrespectful."

"It is a vastly amusing trick for the boys," said Victor Maine. "I tell you, the more jokes a fellow plays, the more the others like him."

"Well," said Gerald, "just tell me how they get the flies in. I shouldn't like to try it, you know—it sounds so shabby. But tell me, when you are putting in one fly, how do you keep the others from coming out?"

Then Victor explained to him that he was to have a paper bag or a box with a hole small enough to be stopped by one finger: that he was to collect about a hundred flies, alive and well; then the master's desk was to be watched until it was left unlocked, and the box or bag was to be slipped in, and the lid of the desk shut down at once.

"When the master comes," said Victor, "he opens the desk and puts his head in. Tableau!"

It seemed unkind. "Tell me something funnier than that," Gerald asked. "You know I don't want to do anything underhand. I don't mind standing on my head, or putting the sweetstuff into the flour: that would be found out soon enough."

"All right!" said the other. "Play your pranks openly; you'll get into a nice pickle. There are hundreds of things to do, if you like. Blacken your face and play the bones. Fetch a donkey to dinner, and say there's a visitor. Stand up and wish the Principal many happy returns, and say you thought it might be his birthday."

All this led Gerald to ask, naturally enough—"Did you do all those things when you were at school?"

"No," said Victor slowly. "Too much fag."

They had reached the gate of his grandfather's house. "Won't you come in?"

The Old Lodge was three or four times larger than Gerald's home, and Victor Maine seemed to have fine times. He was seldom alone. If he had not three or four boy cousins staying with him, he was away on visits, or off to school for brief periods. Sometimes he had a tutor; sometimes he travelled for his education; at other times he did nothing but amuse himself at yachting, cycling, or anything else he took into his head.

His grandfather, his only guardian, was almost an invalid—a nervous old gentleman, in weak health, spoiling the boy from day to day, just to keep him quiet and satisfied. If Victor, through idleness, became too hard to be managed, or too wayward and wild for his grandfather's nerves, the guardian would assume a tone of severity, say "something must be done," and pack him off to school or send him away with a tutor. So Victor's education was going on in a very different way from that of most boys; and though he was the handsomest and richest lad in the village, he was hardly the wisest.

Gerald felt that if he went into the Old

Lodge, he would certainly be associating with Victor too much. Many twinges of conscience had told him that they had no right to be companions even for that walk on the road. So he insisted on saying "good-bye," and went away with sadly altered views of school life.

If the truth were known, he felt sorry for having to refuse to go freely into that fine old house—very sorry that his father had taken a dislike to the most dashing and charming lad he had ever known—one who was heir to a fortune too, and had always money to spend.

In all this, the remembrance of the pony consoled him.

"I'll deserve it," he thought. "Shan't I work hard at school! Of course I must have some fun, and be a bit daring; I want to be a favourite with the boys. But I can study well, too, and please my father, no matter how hard the school is. Then I shall have Sweep at Christmas."

They went to see the pony that very evening—his father and he.

"Why are you so thoughtful, my boy?" said the father kindly. "Keep your heart up."

"I was thinking of school," said poor Gerald.

"But you were quite happy about it this morning."

Gerald said nothing. He did not wish to explain that he sometimes found it hard to keep his courage with that prospect before him of teasings, thrashings, stickjaw pudding, cruel masters, and hard mutton.

But they arrived at Mr. Haines' livery stables at last; and the pony was beautiful. The sight of Sweep was enough to raise his heart, no matter how disappointed he was about the outlook at school. The idea of patting and coaxing that pony, stabling him, feeding him, riding him at will, was sufficient to put out of his mind the dread of the school. Yes, there might be three hard months between him and the holidays; but Sweep was a beauty, and would wait for him. The way that animal trotted out to the stable-man, the swing of the black mane, the whisk of the long black tail, the soft intelligent look of the great eyes, were enough to make any boy in love with Sweep.

"Father," said Gerald, "will he be too grown-up when I come back? I don't want him to grow into a horse."

You should have heard his father laugh, and the stable-man too. It was a relief to Gerald's anxiety to be told that ponies were not young horses growing bigger; he had never known that before. At the same time, though Sweep would grow no more, he was still very young.

"He's not quite broken in, sir," said the man, "but he's quiet of an evening. You should see him canter in the morning, and shy at the pump, sir; ain't he fresh then?"

After this the ostler got a saddle and bridle for "the young gentleman," and Gerald had a delicious ride round and round the stable-yard. The man kept near him, rather to Gerald's disgust; but he found the need of help, for he did not know how to manage Sweep, and that interesting animal took him half through some doorways, and rubbed his leg against the wall.

"I'll soon know all about it when I have him for my own," he said. "You see, he is so different from a donkey."

"Oh! indeed he is, sir," said the man, with a grin. "If he took it into his head to bolt out on the road now, he could gallop with any hunter in the country."

"The length of leg would be wanting, I think," said Mr. Brierly; then he and the ostler had a learned conversation about Sweep's pedigree, and decided that he was of very good breed, and they spoke about the action of the near leg and the off leg in a way that puzzled Gerald, because the near leg was not the one nearest them. Mr. Haines came on the scene too, and Mr. Brierly had a talk with him, in which it was agreed over again that he should have the choice of buying that pony or not at Christmas.

When they left the stables, he said to Gerald—

"Now, my boy, it depends on you whether you have Sweep or not. I shall not ask much of you; but if you *try* to do well at school, I promise you you shall have the pony, and riding lessons too."

"Father," said he, "I *will* try—I will, indeed. I never saw such a handsome pony in my life, did you? Victor Maine has not a pony; he only has a bicycle."

He regretted the word at once, and closed his lips; but it was too late. At the name, the kind face of his father clouded over.

"Never mind about Victor Maine," he said rather sternly. "How often am I to tell you, Gerald, you have nothing to do with that boy? It is nothing to you what he has or what he has not."

There was a painful silence. The father looked at the boy searchingly. The boy began to feel that it was a difficult world, after all. He had never been told *why* he was not to make a companion of Victor Maine.

Under his father's glance, he felt that his face must look guilty—that the whole story of the morning walk was written in his timid eyes and hot cheeks.

Still he thought, "How could I have helped meeting him? And we can't be companions if I am going away."

The father took a kind view of his confusion: he thought Gerald was sorry at never being allowed to have that boy for his friend. So, instead of asking questions, he felt for his son's disappointment, and turned the talk back to the delightful promise of the pony.

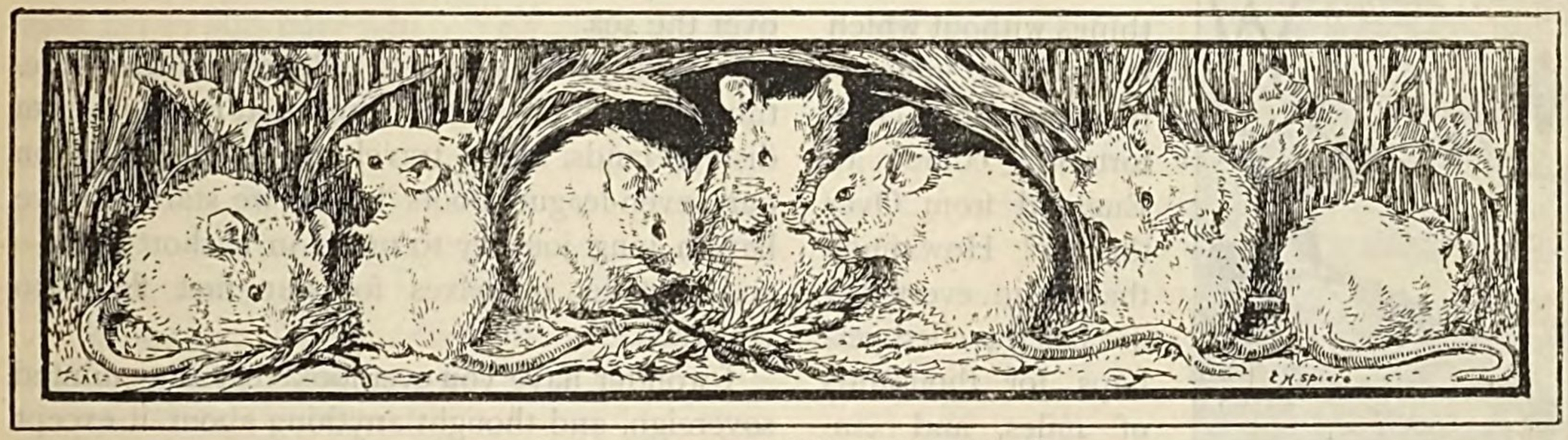
The last Sunday at home came: the last kneeling in the familiar church for many a long day: the last evening with the happy home circle all together in the dear old house and in the summer garden.

Then came Monday, with a quaking sense, a bound of the heart at waking up, and finding it was really come, with broad light and nearly time to go. A hurried breakfast, fond "good-byes," choking tears at the last moment, when Gerald was determined to keep up, though he had never guessed how hard it would be to feel his mother's farewell kisses, and to hear her loving words—then Gerald hurried out by his father's side to the cab, feeling that home, sweet home, was gone for a long time, and that he had to take the great plunge.

He was off to the school he dreaded.

(*To be continued.*)

A DISCONTENTED MOUSE.



"GOLDEN SHONE THE WHEAT-EARS."

TO the breezy cornfield,
When the day was fine,
Quite a merry party
Of mice stole out to dine.

Dainty was the feast there
Spread upon the ground,
Golden shone the wheat-ears,
Large and ripe and sound.

Only one wee mousie
Turned away alone;
While the others feasted,
He, indeed, had none:

Grumbled through the noontide,
Just because the rest
Had, or so he thought it,
Chosen all the best.

Foolish little mousie,
Having such a whim,
With a lovely field full
Lying there for him!

Don't you think it likely,
As the moments flew,
He was sadly hungry,
Yes, and sorry too?

A USE FOR EVERYTHING.

ON a lovely green bank in a country lane, bordered by ferns and flowering blackberry bushes, grew a tall stately fox-glove. It shook its crimson and spotted bells in the bright sunshine, with a jaunty air that seemed to say—

"Look at me, how handsome I am!"

Low-crouched among the fern a graceful fragile blue-bell gently swayed to and fro. The sun was bright, the birds sang, the butterflies sported, the flowers blossomed; and everything seemed to rejoice in the bright beautiful spring.

"Dear me!" said the fox-glove disdainfully, "what is this little blue thing at my feet? What is the use of quaking and quivering like that? Why don't you come out boldly, and show yourself in the sunshine?"

"Perhaps if I did," said the blue-bell timidly, "I should be blown away."

"Pooh, pooh!" laughed the fox-glove. "Nothing like roughing it in this world, I can tell you, my friend."

"We are not all as strong and stout as you," said the blue-bell.

"More's the pity," retorted the fox-glove. "Only stout strong fellows like me are of any use in this world."

"I am not so sure of *that*," answered the blue-bell. "It is nice to be strong and tall, no doubt. But Providence makes nothing without a purpose, and beautiful and delicate things have their uses, as well as strong and robust ones."

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

FROM OVER THE SEA.

I.—A NUGGET FROM TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND.

PORTION OF A SOUTH AFRICAN GOLDFIELD.

WHAT a number of things without which it would be impossible to get along comfortably come to England from Over the Sea! How much that is in every-day use has travelled perhaps for thousands of miles, and employed hundreds of folk, big and little, before it has finally found a resting-place amongst us as an article of service or ornament!

The wool that forms part of the material in the carpet upon the floor may have grown upon the back of a sheep in distant New Zealand. The cotton from which the window curtains are manufactured comes, most likely, from far America. Your coffee has travelled from Ceylon, your sugar from Jamaica. Even the money which it is certainly necessary to have to enable anyone to buy these things is made from metals which are found for the most part in countries over the sea.

Now, as I am going to tell you a little something about a few of the things that reach us from distant lands, let us travel together, putting on our seven-league boots before we start—for we have a long journey to make in a short time—and betake ourselves for our first flight to Australia.

I wonder have you ever looked at a new minted sovereign, and thought anything about it except what a number of things it would buy? and when you have heard about the "gold-fields," what sort of places have you pictured them to be? I daresay you have imagined that a place with such a name must be a wide open space, with heaps of glittering gold scattered about on every side, so that you would not need to do anything but stoop and pick it up in order to collect a fortune. The goldfield in Australia of which I am going to tell you is quite different from that.

Picture to yourself a wide stretch of hilly barren-looking country, upon which the sun is beating with terrible intenseness. The only specks

of shade visible are the shadows made by the diggers' huts in the distance, the very breeze that blows feels as if it must have passed through a furnace, and makes the hot air hotter. This is the gold-field. There is no sign of the precious metal anywhere, as far as you can judge. It is not to be seen by looking along the ground; not a sparkle of it greets your eye if you pick up a handful of dirt and carefully examine it. Yet, all the same, you are standing on Tom Tiddler's Ground.

Anything that is worth the winning is worth the working for, you know, and no one works harder for his bread-and-butter than Tom Tiddler, the bronze-faced miner.

Week after week, month after month, Tom digs like a mole below the surface of the ground, looking for "nuggets," as the pieces of rough gold are named. Down a dark mysterious hole, called a "shaft," Tom descends to his work, and often he will dig for long weeks and never find "the colour," as he says—meaning the very smallest particle of gold.

Sometimes, just as he has reached "the lead," or fortunate spot, and is doing well, the water will get into and flood his mine, or the sides of the shaft fall in and bury him. Very often the poor fellow gets ill, and, having no one to look after him properly, he dies. You see, therefore, what an amount of patience, labour, suffering, and perhaps lives, it takes before the gold that goes to make a sovereign is got from out of the depths of the earth, and brought up into the light of day.

You see that Tom Tiddler's life is not all sunshine. You perhaps pictured him living like a king in a castle, sauntering out when the whim seized him to gather up his beautiful treasures in a basket; not clad in toil-stained garments, burrowing like a rabbit in the earth, and living in a little wooden cottage, which he speaks of as his "shanty."

Yet Tom is a happy fellow, all the same; he takes the good fortune with the bad, and digs away with pick and shovel, filling the buckets with the loosened earth, and they are then drawn to the surface by means of a windlass, emptied, and quickly lowered.

The way the precious metal is separated from the clay and gravel is very simple. Tom puts a few handfuls of the soil he has dug into a tin dish and fills it up with water, then he shakes it round and round in much the same way that you may have seen a man sift mould. Next he pours away the muddy water, fills the dish afresh, and so on several times, till nothing is left but gravel at the bottom of his vessel. This he carefully examines. If there is a nugget amongst the stones, he soon sees it and picks it out, but the most minute particles of gold do not escape him either: he detects the very smallest grains lying in the sand, and saves them all.

So here it is at last: our beautiful nugget that has lain so long in silence deep down in the ground. For how long has it been there? Who can tell? perhaps hundreds and thousands of years: here it is to begin a life of endless adventure for who can say how many hundreds of years more?

Tom carries his hard-earned gold to the bank, in the little settlement of houses which goes by the name of "town," built on the outskirts of every "field" of importance, and at the bank it is weighed, its value decided on, and the miner, receiving its worth in coin, returns to his "claim," there to toil on at the same endless round as before.

But quite a different state of affairs awaits the nugget. Along with many others, it is put into an earthen pot, or "crucible," and then placed in a furnace the heat of which is so great that it is quickly melted, and will pour as easily as water. In this state it is turned into a mould, and when it is cooled and the mould removed, there you see a beautiful yellow brick, not quite so large as those used to build houses. This brick of solid gold is called an "ingot."

Is it heavy? Well, I will give you an idea of that. I was once told that if I could lift two of these bricks placed one on the top of the other that I might have them. It looked so easy, I felt sure I could, till I tried; and that I tried very hard you may be certain, but it was no use: I could only just raise one: to lift two was out of the question.

The ingot now says "Farewell" to its peaceful days at Tom Tiddler's Ground, which is soon left hundreds of miles behind, and after tossing about on the sea in a big ship for many weeks, is at last landed and lodged in that safest of all places, the Bank of England. You think,

perhaps, that its journeys are almost done now. Not at all.

It is next taken to the Mint, which is the place where money is made. The Mint is a very fine building, and a guard of soldiers stands outside night and day, so you might imagine our ingot would get well treated here, but in truth its experiences are now to be the most trying of all. Only the most pure gold can stand them without being affected and come out bright and good-tempered in the end.

Once again it is melted by fire, and a little copper added to make it harden when cold. This time the moulds take the form of bars, about two feet in length and one inch in thickness. These are then passed between strong rollers.

To see it going through, you might imagine all the goodness would be squeezed out of it; instead of that, the bars bob up serenely after the operation, looking a trifle thinner, it is true, but then, just consider how they have grown in the process: they are now nearly three times as long as before, and of a most beautiful colour besides.

After this the bars are called "fillets"—the sort of fillets poor King Midas had served to him, no doubt, when he was starving for want of something to eat.

The fillets are then passed through a punching machine, and cut out into little round pieces the exact size of a sovereign, only quite smooth and plain.

Next they are placed in a stamping machine, the noise of which would knock the head off most things, but, strangely enough, in this case it knocks the head on, for when the coin drops out at the bottom of the stamper there is seen our gracious Queen's portrait on one side, and St. George with the Dragon on the reverse, and you realise, for the first time, perhaps, that the nugget has turned into the familiar twenty-shilling piece of the realm, prepared to do a little burning on its own account, if it gets into your pocket.

After this, it is weighed and done up into bags, ready for the use of all who earn it. So that even now it is only on the very threshold of its life: it will travel up and down the world, be passed from hand to hand, from country to country, and its experiences will doubtless be many and curious ere, battered and worn, it will once more find itself back at the Mint, to be tried in the fire, made new, and again started off on its endless journey.

The next time you have a sovereign for your very own, you will perhaps think a little of what it costs to get it before you melt it in the usual way by turning it into silver and coppers. If properly spent its worth is priceless, and if improperly used it were better it had never been found.

A thing that has travelled so far, that has passed the trial of such fires, and come through all with so bright a face, so true a ring, is surely worth spending wisely. EDITH A. FINDLAY.

MUSIC OF THE WOODS.

EVER in the green old woods,
Little birds were singing;
Softly on the summer air,
Lovely notes kept ringing;
But, through all the morning long—
Which could sing the sweetest song?

Many sang, because the day
Beamed with life and brightness,
And their little hearts could hold
Only love and lightness;
With no fear of coming cares—
And a beauteous song was theirs!

But a blackbird, from his bough,
Spied a humble maiden
Toiling up the winding path,
Slow, and over-laden.
She looked weary as could be—
"I shall sing to her!" said he.

Then he ventured yet more near,
With his round eyes glistening;
Cheered her with his gladsome voice,
While she rested, listening.
Now, through all the morning long,
Was not *his* the sweetest song?

ELLIS WALTON.

LISTENING. (*See p.* 56.)

When the Nile is Imprisoned.

Water is so necessary for the cultivated land in Lower Egypt that artificial means are used to keep the river Nile from falling below a certain height. This is done by means of two huge dams or weirs built across the river, about thirty miles below Cairo, where the stream divides into two branches, one entering the sea at Rosetta the other at Damietta. Each weir is a long bridge, whose arches can be closed when required so as to hold up the water, while a lock at the sides provides a passage for boats. The weir over the Rosetta branch has sixty-one arches, that over the Damietta branch seventy-one. During low Nile, when the arches are shut, the water thus imprisoned is conveyed by three main canals to irrigate the fields of the whole of Lower Egypt. When the river is in flood the arches are kept open. These dams are known as the Nile Barrage, of which a picture is given in the New Heading of the Pocket-Book. The Barrage was begun in 1843 by a French engineer named Monge Bey, and finished in 1861. Having been damaged in 1867, it fell into disuse till 1883, when Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff undertook to restore it. His work was completed in 1890, at a cost of half a million of money. The total expense of the Barrage from first to last has reached close on £2,500,000, but this great sum is more than made up for by the fine crops that the watered land yields.

A Sandwich Islander.

So much has been written in newspapers and books of late years about the Sandwich Islands, and the leper settlement on one of them, that you may be interested in the portrait of a native in the New Heading. He wears a short cloak of feathers that is seldom seen now in the islands, and though he brandishes a big knife he is not a warlike person, the natives being a peace-loving folk. The climate of the islands is said to be the finest in the world, but in spite of this fact, which surely should point to length of days, the people are gradually dying out.

The Elephant Seal.

Many of the islands in the Antarctic Ocean are tenanted by a large seal which is called the elephant seal, from its long nose (see the picture in the New Heading). This proboscis is found fully developed, however, only in the old males, in some of which it extends twelve inches beyond the mouth. These seals were once numerous on the coast of California, but ceaseless hunting by American sailors seems to have almost entirely killed them off there. They are still sought after in the remote islands of the South Atlantic and Pacific for their skins and blubber.

The Nelson Monument, Edinburgh.

The most noticeable and, in the opinion of some writers, the ugliest object on the Calton Hill, in Edinburgh, is the monument to Nelson

that was finished in 1816. It looks like an extended telescope, but the picture of it in the New Heading will assist you to judge for yourself whether it is ugly or not. As it is a hundred feet high, and stands besides on the summit of the hill, the view of the city and the surrounding country from the top is exceedingly fine. Every day, about one o'clock, a time-ball slowly climbs the flag-staff at the top and falls at the stroke of one, being set free by an electric current from the time-gun at the Castle, with which it is in communication. This tells the exact Greenwich time to the Edinburgh folk.

Sailors of the Olden Time.

Some of you may perhaps be amused to see how a sailor was dressed in the days when England was protected by her wooden walls. You will find in the New Heading a picture representing a seaman of the time of George II., and beside him a Jack Tar of the present day, who has been introduced for the purpose of helping you to note the contrast in their attire. The chief points to be remarked are the tall hat, the pigtail, and the smart little jacket. But both men made first-class sailors, though their style of dress was so entirely different.

A Moated House.

Nearly everyone has seen the moat or ditch that surrounds most castles, but very few persons have seen it full of water. There is an old-fashioned, extremely picturesque house at Ightham, some six miles from Sevenoaks, in Kent, where the moat is never empty. This quaint building dates from the time of Elizabeth, and is one of the rare instances of a dwelling place being wholly surrounded by water, and yet used for the purpose of residence. The Moat House at Ightham (a sketch of which appears in the New Heading) attracts a large number of artists and visitors every year.

Carrying a Ship by Railway.

To save the long and often dangerous voyage of six hundred miles round the coast of Nova Scotia, a railway is being constructed across the Isthmus of Chignecto, which will enable a ship to leave the sea at Amherst on the Bay of Fundy, travel overland in a direct line only seventeen miles long, and take the water again at Tidnish on the Gulf of St. Lawrence; or the journey may be reversed. The "lifts" for raising the vessels from the sea to the rails and for lowering them have been finished, the lines have all been laid down, the docks are nearly completed, and the line is expected to be ready for use this year. When the ship standing on its cradle has been placed on the double line of rails of which the way consists, it is drawn to its destination by two gigantic locomotives. You will find a picture of the railway, with a ship just about to start, in the New Heading.

The Acropolis at Athens.

There is no rock in the whole world so famous as the Hill in Athens, upon which stand the remains of the Parthenon, or Temple of Minerva, and other ruins. The hill is known as the Acropolis, which was a term applied generally to the citadel or fortress built upon the highest point of a city. The Parthenon was adorned with the grandest sculptures that have ever been executed, but the temple and its treasures have suffered incredible damage, mainly from the Turks, during the course of ages. To save some of the figures from further injury, Lord Elgin brought many of them to England in 1816, and placed them in the British Museum, where they are known as the Elgin Marbles. The New Heading contains a picture of the Acropolis.

Germany in London.

The series of National Exhibitions that have been held in London of late years have not only been places of amusement, but have also proved to some extent to be places of instruction as well. To this rule the German Exhibition of this summer offers no exception, and little Londoners and children on a visit to the metropolis will find much to delight them in this big Show. In the gardens there are several objects of interest, such as the full-sized models of a Schleswig-Holstein farm, and the famous Heidelberg Tun (or barrel), and the "scenery" representing the Rhine, Heligoland, and some well-known cities. Music of the highest order is discoursed by celebrated bands specially brought over from Germany, while Tyrolese singers give pleasing specimens of their skill. Then in the great hall there is a display of pictures of all kinds, by German painters, and a very large number of stalls on which are

exhibited the products of every branch of German industry. But what will perhaps entertain girls and boys more than anything else are the splendid spectacles in the arena that have for their object to illustrate the military history of the country, from the time of Charles the Great to the period of the Thirty Years' War. In short, the German Exhibition is a successful effort to combine the useful with the ornamental, and, as such, may be commended to young and old alike.

The Order of the Round Table.

A few months ago I told you how Jeanne Snooke, a little lass of ten, had bravely saved her wee brother's life at Portsmouth by jumping into the sea after him. You will be glad to learn that, in recognition of her heroic deed, she has been awarded the first Silver Medal of the Order of the Round Table. This Order was founded in January, 1890, by "Aunt Maggie," who is better known to you as Maggie Symington; and its object is to bring together into one noble army all girls and boys who are willing to obey the call of duty. Its motto, taken from one of George MacDonald's poems, urges that

> "We must do the thing we ought
> Before the thing we may."

Already the Order numbers six thousand knights and damsels, esquires and thimble-maids. "Aunt Maggie's" address is "Hunstanton, Norfolk."

A NEGRO OF THE SOUDAN.

The Negro in Office.

The fellaheen, or peasants, in Upper Egypt have always been cruelly treated, but more especially in the recent past than at the present day. Their most brutal task-masters have generally been found among the negroes of the Nile valley, who have acted at times as officers of troops, as tax-collectors, and as highly-placed servants in the households of pashas or governors. In respect of his tyranny and indifference to human suffering, the negro of the Soudan does not compare favourably with his cousin of the African west coast, who is by no means a pattern of kindness. You will see, from the portrait on this page, that the negro of the Nile cannot hide the harshness of his looks even by the handsome dress that he wears in virtue of his office.

A Novel Scare-crow.

Some of the farmers of the Eifel, the district that lies between the frontier of Belgium and the Rhine, adopt a novel plan for scaring the birds from the wheat. A number of poles are set up in the cornfields, and a wire is conducted from one to another, just like the telegraph posts that you see alongside the railway. From the top of each pole there hangs a bell, which is connected with the wire. Now in the valley a brook flows along with a current strong enough to turn a small water-wheel, to which the wire is fastened. As the wheel goes round it jerks the wire, and so the bells in the different fields are set a-tinkling. The bells thus rung so mysteriously frighten the birds from the grain, and even excite the wonder of men and women until they discover the secret. This simple contrivance is found to serve its purpose very well.

A Royal Bowler.

Though the fine game of bowls is not a Queen's game, kings both of England and Scotland used to play it in the olden time. Charles I. was very fond of it. After he had been handed over to the Parliament, and during his stay at Holmby in 1647, he beguiled the days of his enforced leisure with many a game at bowls. He was a keen player, too, and often took the trouble to ride to Althorp or Harrowden, because there was a better bowling-green at these villages than at Holmby. This was quite the spirit of the enthusiast.

Mistaken Kindness to a Crocodile.

The superstition of the Hindoos displayed itself in a strange fashion not long ago. Some fishermen at Kidderpore, on the Hooghly, had captured a crocodile, and being unable to kill it, were compelling it to accompany them to the nearest police station—were "running it in," as we say—for the sake of the reward usually offered for such creatures. On the way a native gentleman met them, and persuaded them, for a bribe, to allow the animal to return to the river. In doing this foolish action he argued that, having shown kindness to it, the crocodile would not attack him and his family when they went to bathe. It is to be hoped that the pious man possessed more common sense in the water than he owned on shore, else his life would not be worth the purchasing if he came within reach of that selfsame crocodile.

The Blind Soldier and his Bible.

There is a deaf and blind soldier living in Bridgeport, Connecticut, who possesses what is probably the biggest Bible in the world. Some time after he had done his fighting—for he went through most of the Civil War—the American Bible Society gave him this extraordinary edition of the Scriptures. It consists of eight volumes, and is printed in the raised type that the blind read. The books are each 15½ inches long, 12 inches wide, and almost 6 inches thick, and when piled on a table they reach a height of 3 feet 8 inches. The volumes contain 1,849 leaves and cost the society £7 to produce them.

What are the Dog Days?

We owe the notion of the Dog Days to the old Romans. These days embrace the period between the 3rd of July and the 11th of August. Falling thus in the height of summer, it need not have surprised the Romans that July must naturally be a very hot month. But this explanation was too simple. So they made out that the heat and the diseases that it gave rise to were due to the fact that the star Canicula (the Little Dog) rose and set at the same time as the Sun. This was an absurd superstition, for the Little Dog does not rise with the Sun now till the end of August, and yet July remains as hot as ever it was. But popular delusions die hard, and the 'Dog Days" will be a favourite phrase for ages to come.

"Jack" and the Signals.

Not long ago a baboon named "Jack" was a well-known figure at the railway station of Uitenhage in Cape Colony. It had learned to work the signals and to wheel a barrow. When bidden do so, it would go to its master's cottage, fetch his walking-stick, lock the door after it, remove the key, and then return with it and the stick to its master. To its owner "Jack" was invaluable, for he had lost both his legs. The very day the monkey died a main line train was accidentally turned into a siding.

Potato Talk.

This curious phrase used to be applied to the household gossip that was supposed to be indulged in at the "five o'clock" teas in Germany. Ladies were wont to take their work to a friend's house, and enjoy a little chit-chat over the tea and cake about their domestic affairs generally and cooking in particular. It must have been a stern and unsympathetic man who sneered at this conversation as "potato talk."

A New Use for Snakes.

Benares has long been known as a sort of paradise for beggars, many of whom are great rascals. Several of these scoundrels are said to have adopted a new plan to extort alms. They loiter about the Monkey Temple wearing large cobras around their necks or carrying them in baskets. When a band of pilgrims draws near, the beggars surround them, and unless money be given to them voluntarily, they hold the snakes close to the pious travellers and thus terrify them until the frightened folk are only too glad to hand the rogues money, or something just as useful.

PAGES FOR VERY LITTLE FOLK.

LAZY TIM.

HAVE you heard the story of lazy Tim?
So lazy he was, folk say,
That even to eat was such trouble to him,
He took half a bite only each day.

His parents tried every plan they knew,
But he got so pale and thin
That at last they didn't know what to do,
So they called a doctor in.

He felt his pulse and he thumped his chest,
And then, with a learnèd cough,
He said "I'm sure, if you make him begin,
Too lazy he'll be to leave off."

They brought Tim's dinner, and made him eat;
He set to work with a will,
He ate all they had—all there was in the town—
And I fancy he's eating still.

WHAT JEN-NY FOUND.

"I WAS learn-ing a piece of po-et-ry yes-ter-day," said Jen-ny, "and it be-gan—

'Oh, only look what I have found,
A sparrow's nest upon the ground,'

and now I have found a spar-row's nest my-self. Is not that strange?"

"How do you know it is a spar-row's nest?" said Char-ley; "there are no birds in it."

"I know by the eggs," said Jen-ny; "fath-er told me about the spar-rows and their eggs when he was hear-ing me say the piece of po-et-ry. He said spar-rows' eggs were red-dish white with brown spots, and he show-ed me a pic-ture of them, and you see these are spot-ted. There are two left, for the oth-ers fell out of the nest on the ground, and were brok-en."

"'I KNOW BY THE EGGS.'"

"What a pity!" said Char-ley.

"Yes," said Jen-ny, "the poor spar-rows have no home now. It was such a wind-y night last night that the nest was blown out of the tree; and you see that a great man-y boughs were brok-en, there are piec-es of branch-es ev-er-y-where."

"What will the spar-rows do?"

"I don't know."

"Could we put the nest in some place where the spar-rows would see it?" ask-ed Char-ley.

"We could not reach high e-nough," said Jen-ny; "and I do not think the spar-rows would come to it. We will take it home and ask fath-er a-bout it."

The two child-ren went as fast as they could go, Jen-ny hold-ing the nest ver-y care-ful-ly, so that the two eggs should not drop out. On their way they met their ba-by sis-ter Nes-sy trot-ting to-wards them so quick-ly that they were a-fraid she would fall.

"Me run from nurse."

"Oh, ba-by, that is naughty," said Jen-ny.

"What 'oo dot?" ask-ed Nes-sy, look-ing at the nest.

"A nest with two lit-tle eggs," said Jen-ny; "look, are not the eggs pret-ty?"

"Me have it," said Nes-sy, reach-ing out her hand.

"No, no, ba-by," said Char-ley, reach-ing out his hand al-so.

"'ME RUN FROM NURSE.'"

But Nes-sy push-ed his hand a-way, and in so do-ing, she knock-ed a-gainst the nest, which Jen-ny was hold-ing to-wards her to look at, and it fell to the ground, and the two eggs roll-ed out, and strik-ing a-gainst some stones, were brok-en.

"It will be no use to try to put it for the birds now," said Jen-ny, half cry-ing; "there will be no eggs for the poor birds to take care of now."

"Per-haps now they will build an-oth-er nest," said Char-ley.

"I don't know," said Jen-ny; "we can ask fath-er when we get home. Poor birds, they have no home, and no eggs to hatch."

Ba-by look-ed at Jen-ny and Char-ley, and laugh-ed as if she had done some-thing fun-ny.

And Jen-ny and Char-ley were glad to see nurse com-ing to take ba-by a-way.

J. G.

BA-BETTE AND HER KIT-TENS.

IN the north of France the coun-try-peo-ple wear wood-en shoes; and as Ba-bette liv-ed there with her fath-er and moth-er, she too wore wood-en shoes.

Once when her moth-er went to the town she bought a doll for Ba-bette; and Ba-bette thought it the most beau-ti-ful doll that there was in the world, and was nev-er tir-ed of play-ing with it. She ev-en took it to bed with her, so that she might see it the first thing in the morn-ing.

But one fine day their neigh-bour,

"'WHO'LL BUY MY KITTENS?'" (*See p.* 65.)

old Li-sa Ma-non, call-ed to Ba-bette and said—

"If you will come in, I will show you some-thing much pret-ti-er than that doll of yours."

"Oh, there could not be any-thing so pret-ty as my doll," said Ba-bette.

"Come and see," said old Li-sa.

And Ba-bette went.

"Oh!" cri-ed Bab-ette. And down went her doll up-on the floor, and down went the bas-ket she was car-ry-ing.

And in an-oth-er mo-ment Ba-bette was on the floor too, strok-ing and play-ing with six lit-tle kit-tens.

"Oh, the dear kit-tens, the dear kit-tens!" she said.

"Are they not pret-ty?" said old Li-sa, "much pret-ti-er than the doll? And they can run a-bout and play, and can say, 'Mew, mew, mew.' And they can drink milk out of a sau-cer; their moth-er has taught them to lap it up. Yes, their moth-er teach-es them ev-er-y-thing, and she wash-es them and takes care of them."

One of the kit-tens had crept up on Ba-bette's should-er, and three had got in-to her bas-ket, and an-oth-er she held in her hand. She lift-ed up the bas-ket and there she stood smil-ing and say-ing—

"Five kit-tens, who'll buy my kit-tens. Do you want to sell the kit-tens, Ma-dame Ma-non? There should be six, but one is play-ing with my doll."

"No," said old Li-sa, "I do not want to sell my kit-tens, but when they are old-er, I will give you one for your-self."

Ba-bette gave a lit-tle cry of joy.

"Which will you have?" said old Li-sa.

Ba-bette put all the kit-tens on the floor and look-ed at them one by one with much care.

Then she said, "I will have this lit-tle one that is play-ing with my doll. Per-haps the lit-tle kit-ten likes the doll, and so it will be nice for them to be to-geth-er."

"Ah, you see the kit-ten is pret-ti-er than the doll; you will like it best."

"I do not know," said Ba-bette, "I shall like them both. And we shall sit in the sun-shine on warm days, and I shall nurse my doll, and the kit-ten will play be-side me." J. G.

TWO LITTLE BIRDS.

TWO pretty little birds I know--
Within our field they come and go;
One seems to find his chief delight
In many a wild and wandering flight.

The other sings, and seeks his rest
For ever near his tiny nest;
And much I fancy—do not you?—
That he's the happier of the two.

OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PAGES.

ANSWERS TO "PICTURE STORY WANTING WORDS" (*Vol. XXXIII., p.* 360).

FIRST PRIZE STORY.

NEVER before had the inhabitants of Squire Kendwood's stables seen such pups as Tip and Toza. Their tricks were innumerable, and, I am sorry to say, they had generally a double object: they first considered how they could best procure an extra bone; and secondly, how they could annoy one of their dignified elders. Dignity, Tip and Toza could not stand; and as Jingo the mastiff largely possessed this quality, they waged continual war against him.

Now Jingo was a favourite with all the stablemen, and as such received many a dainty morsel. With this in his mouth, he would jump over the wall that separated their yard from a meadow. Oh, how Tip and Toza longed to enter this meadow! but, alas! the wall was high, and they were small.

The diligent watch they kept on the gate was at length rewarded, for one day the groom, quitting the stables in haste, left (oh joy!) the gate unlatched. The sharp eyes of the pups immediately noticed this, and, with a little caution, they managed to creep out unobserved. Their joy at discovering that Jingo was at the end of the field, enjoying a juicy bone, was even greater than the bliss of finding themselves at liberty. One thing was certain—they must have that bone. A plan of action was soon settled. Tip was to march upon the enemy's right wing—or rather, leg—and by keeping up a sharp fire in that quarter, distract his attention, and cause him to leave the booty in pursuit of the intruder. Toza was then to advance cautiously and unobserved, seize on the prize, and run off with it to a secure hiding-place. The sly couple started off in high spirits, feeling sure of the coveted bone. But they reckoned without their host, for they had not gone very many yards when they encountered a pair of large goggle eyes, which were soon followed by a hideous puffed-out little body. Ah, it was true then what their good kind mother had so often told them, that a large-eyed monster took all greedy pups, and dipped them thrice in the pond. Tip and Toza remained rooted to the ground under the spell of those awful eyes; and during these few seconds all their naughty tricks, all their greedy thoughts and actions, all the rejected advice of their mother, flashed through their minds. Oh, how fervently they resolved that if ever they reached home alive, they would never, never be greedy again! In an instant the monster sprang, with a flying leap, right (as they thought) at their heads. With two terrified little barks, they fled, their tails between their legs; nor did they stop till safe inside their own kennel. On his return, some twenty minutes later, Jingo found them still trembling. They now no longer envy him even his juicy bones, as they still believe that the eating of them necessitates encountering The Monster of the Field.

IRENE M. E. CLARK.

Whitethorns, Old Town Road, Eastbourne. (Aged 15¾.)

Certified by EDITH CLARK (Mother).

SECOND PRIZE STORY.

"I WANT adventures," said Roly. "So do I," added Poly. They were two little lop-eared spaniels, and they lived with Mr. McRoye. They had all they wanted in the shape of care and food, but they were discontented, and considered their life "humdrum." "We will be an honour to our mother's name!" said Roly grandly. "We will seek adventures in the far world." "Very well," replied Poly meekly; he always followed Roly, both in word and action. "When shall we go, Roly?" "Now, now!" said Roly pompously. "I fear nothing." "Oh!" barked Poly, for once not repeating Roly's words, for, though rather a coward, Poly was a truthful dog. "Oh, look, there is a green thing hopping along! What is it?" "Kill it," cried Roly, in a panic. "Get off, you horrid creature, or I will kill you." "No you won't," replied the green thing, a frog; "I am a sage, and will give you good advice." Roly looked defiant, but Poly appeared softened. "Pooh," said the former, "*you* a sage! And 'good advice' indeed! You need it more yourself." "N—no, Roly," said his brother, rather timidly. "Stay, green sage, we *do* want good advice." And Roly was so surprised that he yielded. "My advice is," Froggie said coolly, "*Stay at home.* Roly and Poly, you are young and inexperienced ——" "Fine advice," muttered Roly angrily. "I am sure I am not young——" "Yes, you are," said Froggie calmly. "I am also experienced," announced Roly, with a "dogly" (not manly) air. "Stuff and nonsense!" croaked the frog. "The world is hard, and you are small. Now, take my advice, and don't be foolish; wait until you are older. I have travelled much, and haven't enjoyed myself as much as I thought I would. It is all very well when you are older; but at present you had better only stay at home." Roly and Poly grumbled. Froggie scolded. Roly and Poly took his advice, and Froggie hopped away, feeling he had done some good in the world. "Well," said Roly, "he's a strange fellow." "I think he is very wise," Poly said quietly. "And we are foolish; I agree with him." "*I don't*," said Roly emphatically. "I am going off, after all. Good-bye." And he set off. But before long he fell into a watertank, and nearly got drowned. With great difficulty, however, he struggled out, and trotting miserably but humbly back to Poly, who was warming himself in the sun, he said—"Poly, the frog *was* right. I will *not* go out to seek

adventures yet. I am sure I shall not honour my mother's name if I fall into the water every day."

And I think he was right.

RUTH A. AITKEN.
(Aged 10½.)

Inglefield, Totland Bay,
Isle of Wight.

Certified by B. E. AITKEN (Mother).

THIRD PRIZE STORY.

I ONCE had a shaggy-haired dog named Fido. We had nice games together, and I often wished that she had some puppies so that I could play with them. One day mamma called me into the kitchen, and in a basket by the fire were two puppies. They looked such dear little things! I ran and called my little brother Charlie and my sister Grace to come and see them; and of course they each wanted one of the puppies for their own; but as I could not spare them both, I gave them the prettiest one between them. As time went on the puppies grew bigger and stronger, till they could run about by themselves. I am just going to tell you about something that happened to my puppy Fluff. One fine morning the two little dogs trotted off without their mother to the pond at the back of the house. When they had got near the edge, a frog jumped out of the water on to the ground just in front of them, and sat looking up at them, as if to say, "Who are you?" or "What are you doing here?" When they had sat there for some time looking at each other, the frog jumped up and hopped nearer to the puppies to look at them more closely. Fluffie was frightened and ran away; but he went so near the pond that he slipped in. He howled so loudly that his brother ran off and tugged at my dress until I followed him to see what was the matter; when I had got near enough, I heard Fluffie howling. I ran to the pond, and when I got there I saw Fluff struggling in the water. I stood on the edge and managed to get him out with the help of a stick, but he was all covered with green slime. I took him home and he was washed and dried by the kitchen fire. I don't think either Fluff or his brother ever went near the pond again.

MILDRED J. MARYON.
(Aged 9.)

14, *Beaumont Road,*
Hornsey Rise.

Certified by L. MARYON (Mother).

LIST OF HONOUR.

First Prize (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal of the "Little Folks" Legion of Honour*:—IRENE M. E. CLARK (15¾), Whitethorns, Old Town Road, Eastbourne. *Second Prize* (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal*:—RUTH A. AITKEN (10½), Inglefield, Totland Bay, Isle of Wight. *Third Prize* (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal*:—MILDRED J. MARYON (9), 14, Beaumont Road, Hornsey Rise, N. *Honourable Mention, with Members' Medals*:—ARTHUR R. CONDER (15), Cromer House, Leeds; JEANIE B. MACKENZIE, (16), The Glasgow Warehouse, Beauly, Inverness-shire; AGNES JANSSENS (13¾), 36, Rue des Moutons, Louvain, Belgium; KATHLEEN MORTON (11), (no address); LUCY B. MAXWELL (14), St. Petersburg, Russia; EDWARD L. A. HERTSLET (12), Elm House, St. Julian's Farm Road, West Norwood; AMY R. FEILMANN (14), 7, Regent Street, Nottingham; ROSE JONES (8), 89, Bolsover Street, W.; RUTH KELLY (12), Cooleen, Strandtown, Belfast, Ireland; ROSE STACE (13), Hadlow, near Tunbridge, Kent; MURIEL BRODRICK (9¼), 29, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square, W.; MARY E. FARMER (10½), 26, Nassington Road, Hampstead; WITA WORONIECKA (13½), Kanie, poste Rejowiec, Rolej Nadurslansker, Pologne, Russia; MARGARET TWEEDY, (13), 16, Folly Road, Blyth, Northumberland; DOROTHY UNWIN (11), Brincliffe House, Sheffield; CÉCILE ROCHE (13), bei Frau med. rat. Lüken, Detmold, Germany.

THE "LITTLE FOLKS" HUMANE SOCIETY.

THE LITTLE FOLKS Humane Society was founded by the Editor in January, 1882, for the purpose of inculcating Kindness towards Animals; and in order to become a *Member* the accompanying "form of promise" must be copied out, signed, attested, and forwarded to the office of the Magazine.

The name of the sender will then be inscribed on the Register of the Society, and Certificates of Membership sent to any who desire to have them, if *stamped addressed* envelopes be enclosed for the purpose. (The limit of age for enrolment is 21.)

Members will be eligible to become *Officers* of the Humane Society, and receive Officers' Certificates, if they induce Fifty other Children to join, and send in that number of "promises" to the Editor *all together*.

The "form of promise" (to be attested by a Parent, Teacher, or other responsible person) is as follows:—

To the Editor of LITTLE FOLKS.

[Here insert full name.]

I ..... hereby undertake, as far as it lies in my power, to be kind to every living creature that is useful and not harmful to man.

[Full name.]

.....

Witness (of signature) [Address.]

....

.....

(Date) (Age.....)

.....

All communications to the Editor in reference to the Society should have the words "LITTLE FOLKS Humane Society" on the left-hand top corners of the envelopes.

IN ELFLAND.

Words from LITTLE FOLKS. *Music by* FREDERICK J. CROWEST.

PIANO.

dim.

Ped. * Ped. *

1. "Oh, you mer - ry lit - tle men! oh, you jol - ly lit - tle men!—With a hey and a
2. "If I could but come and join you, mer - ry lit - tle men— With a hey and a
3. "I'd bring you cur - rant cake, I'd bring you el - der wine— With a hey and a
4. "You're a bon - nie lit - tle maid, you're a win - some lit - tle maid— With a hey and a

ho, and a non - ny, non - ny no!—When the moon shines bright on a clear warm night, What
ho, and a non - ny, non - ny no!— On a big bat ride till your haunt I spied, In a
ho, and a non - ny, non - ny no!— And mer - ri - ly we'd play un - til the peep of day, And go
ho, and a non - ny, non - ny no!— But my pret - ty lit - tle dear, we couldn't have you here, You're so

rall. *a tempo.* *rall.*

lots of fun and fro-lic you must have, ho, ho! What lots of fun and fro-lic you must have, ho, ho!
snug safe nook in the wood, ho, ho! In a snug safe nook in the wood, ho, ho!
home be-fore the ear-ly bird was up, ho, ho! And go home be-fore the ear-ly bird was up, ho, ho!"
ve - ry, ve - ry big, don't you see, ho, ho! You're so *ve - ry*, ve - ry big, don't you see, ho, ho!"

rall. *a tempo.* *rall.*

Ped. *

OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES.

WORD PUZZLE.

WHAT is the meaning of the following?

A L L O

DOROTHY BEETON.
(Aged 13.)

180, *Haverstock Hill, N.W.*

METAGRAM.

MY first is to cut down.
Change my head and I am to promise.
Again, and I am a line.
Again, and I am not high.
Again, and I am to drag.
Again, and I am to bend.
Again, and I am the present time.
Again, and I am an animal.

ERNEST F. POWELL.
(Aged 10.)

High Street, Shaftesbury.

CHARADES.

MY first is a farm produce.
My second is an insect.
My whole changes its being several times.

My first is an article of use.
My second is a piece of timber.
My whole may be found in the kitchen.

BORIS BERTHENSON.
(Aged 12.)

Sergeivskaia, 40, St. Petersburg.

DOUBLE GEOGRAPHICAL ACROSTIC.

MY initials, read downwards, form the name of a cathedral city of England; my finals, read upwards, form the name of a famous historical town in France.

1. A range of European mountains
2. A large island off China.
3. A famous volcano.
4. A river in France.
5. A province of Austria.
6. A country of South America.
7. A town in Brazil.

MARY A. WILLIAMS.
(Aged 15.)

Dover College, Dover.

ALPHABET PUZZLE.

THE five asterisks of the left slant represent a well-known tree; the next slant, a stand for pictures; the next, something used for catching wild horses; the next, a vegetable. The larger asterisks will then give the name of a well-known fruit.

IRENE WEAR.
(Aged 14.)

6, *Stratford Grove, Newcastle-on-Tyne.*

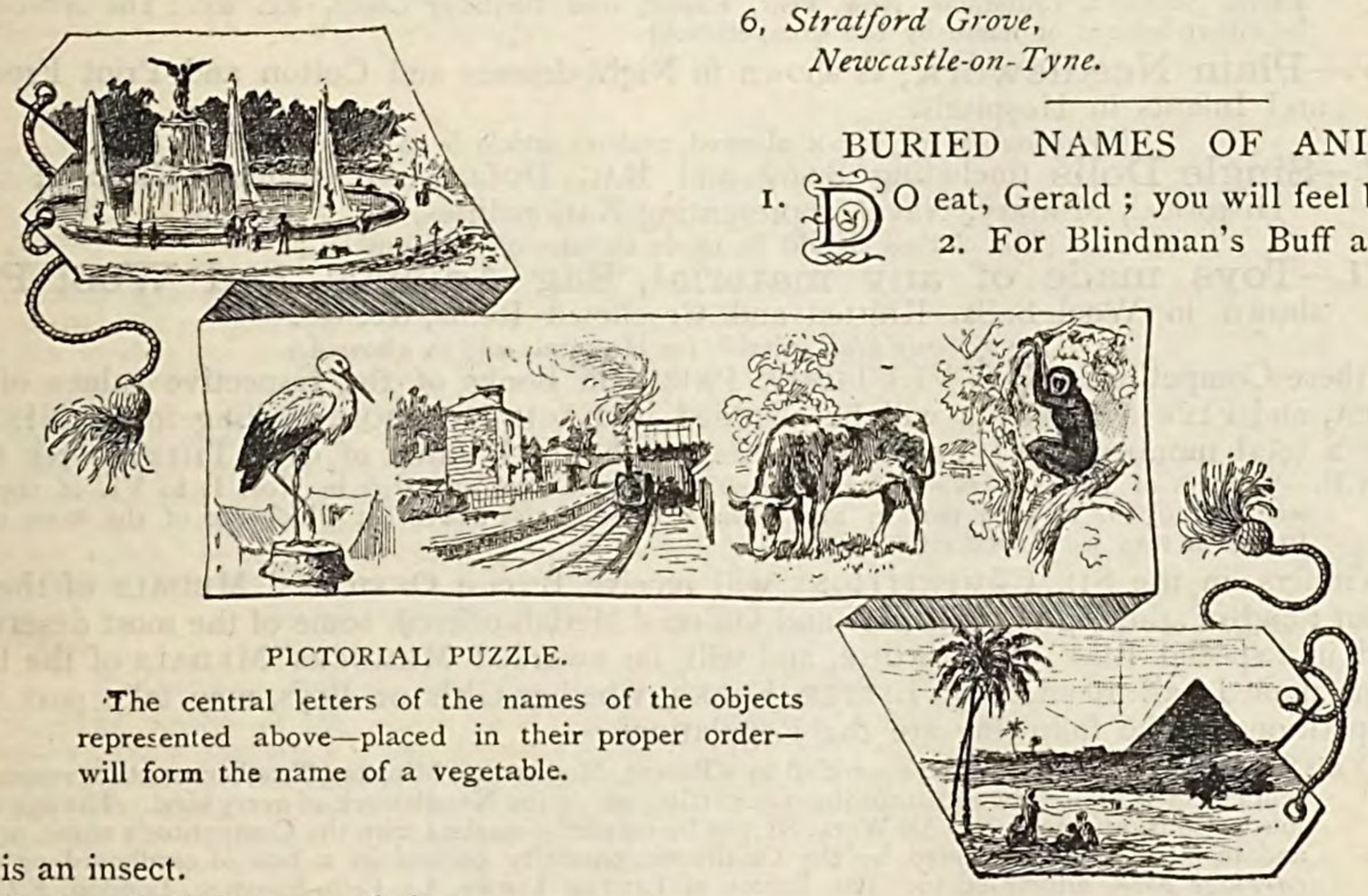
BURIED NAMES OF ANIMALS.

1. DO eat, Gerald; you will feel better then.
2. For Blindman's Buff a lot of children are required.
3. Clara and I will play against Agnes and Bertie.
4. Is your brother at school already?
5. I put the cup on your table.
6. Oh, Leo! pardon me, I pray you.

ELSIE M. DAY.
(Aged 12.)

Glendwr, 52, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.



The central letters of the names of the objects represented above—placed in their proper order—will form the name of a vegetable.

HIDDEN PROVERBS.

AAAAACCCDDEEEEEEEEEEEEFF HHHIKKLLLMNNNOOOPPRRS SSTTTTTUVW.

AABCDEEEEFFFGHHIKLOOORRR STTT.

GERALDINE E. BROAD.
(Aged 12½.)

Sunnyside, St. Germain's Road, Forest Hill, S.E.

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

WHEN the missing letters are supplied, the whole will form a verse from a poem by Longfellow.

"T×e×a×i×d×n×,a×d×h×d×r×n×s×
F×l×s×r×m×h×w×n×s×f×i×h×,
A×a×e×t×e×i×w×f×e×d×w×w×r×
F×o×a×e×g×e×n×i×f×i×h×."

IDA C. VARLEY.
(Aged 12.)

94, *Wharton Road, West Kensington Park, W.*

The Special Prize Competitions for 1891.

BELOW will be found—in accordance with the promise made in the June number—a Complete List of the SPECIAL COMPETITIONS for 1891, in all of which a number of VALUABLE PRIZES and MEDALS are offered. There are SIX COMPETITIONS; and so that Younger Readers may take part in them, and have the same opportunities of success as older ones, *each of them is arranged in* THREE DIVISIONS. The FIRST DIVISION is for those of the ages of *Fourteen*, *Fifteen*, and *Sixteen;* the SECOND DIVISION for those of the ages of *Ten*, *Eleven*, *Twelve*, *and Thirteen;* and the THIRD DIVISION for those *under the age of Ten.*

No. I.—**Quilts, made of any Material, suitable for Cots in Children's Hospitals and Kindred Institutions.**

[Competitors may use their discretion not only as regards the Materials, but also as to the Borders, which may be ornamental or otherwise. The size is to be about forty-six inches long and twenty-six inches broad.]

No. II.—**Knitted or Crocheted Articles, Useful in Children's Hospitals,** such as Shawls, Jackets, Undervests, Crossovers, Socks, Stockings, &c. &c.

No. III.—**Scrap Albums.**

[The Albums may include not only ordinary Scraps and Coloured and Plain Pictures, but also Pressed Flowers, Ferns, Seaweed, Christmas, New Year, Easter, and Birthday Cards, &c. &c. The *Albums* themselves may be either bought or made by the Competitors.]

No. IV.—**Plain Needlework,** as shown in Night-dresses and Cotton and Print Frocks for Children and Infants in Hospitals.

[Machine sewing is not allowed, and no article is to be washed.]

No. V.—**Single Dolls** (including BABY and RAG DOLLS), in Ordinary Clothes; or in Costume—Historical, Military, Naval, representing Nationalities, &c.

[The clothes should be made to take off and put on.]

No. VI.—**Toys made of any material, Rag Animals, and Wool Playthings,** as shown in Wool Balls, Knitted and Crocheted Reins, &c. &c.

[Toys *of any kind* suitable for Hospitals will be allowed.]

In *each* of these Competitions (I. to VI.) THREE PRIZES in Books of the respective values of ONE GUINEA, HALF A GUINEA, and FIVE SHILLINGS will be awarded in EACH DIVISION, making in all NINE Prizes in each Competition, or a total number of FIFTY-FOUR Prizes, of the total Value of over THIRTY-ONE GUINEAS.

[N.B.—Winners of Prizes *of the value of Half a Guinea and upwards* in Nos. I. to VI. of the 1890 Competitions *are not eligible* to take part in any Competitions in the above list which are of the same description as those in which they were successful in 1890.]

All Prize Winners in the SIX COMPETITIONS will receive Bronze OFFICERS' MEDALS of the LITTLE FOLKS Legion of Honour; and in addition to the Prizes and Officers' Medals offered, some of the most deserving Competitors will be included in a special LIST OF HONOUR, and will be awarded MEMBERS' MEDALS of the Legion. Subject to the conditions named, all Readers of LITTLE FOLKS, whether Girls or Boys, may take part in *any or all* of the above Competitions. The following are the Regulations:—

(1) All Work, &c., of every kind to be certified by a Parent, Magistrate, Minister, Teacher, or other responsible person, as the sender's *own unaided* work, including the cutting-out of the Needlework of every kind. The age of *every* Competitor must also be attested. (2) All Work, &c., to be carefully marked with the Competitor's name, age, and full address, and to be sent, accompanied by the Certificate, carefully packed in a box of cardboard or wood, or otherwise, *carriage paid*, addressed to "The Editor of LITTLE FOLKS, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C." (3) The Work, &c., for each Competition to be in a *separate* box or parcel; and no two Competitors to send work, &c., in the same box or parcel. (4) All the Competitions to *close* on **Wednesday, the 30th of September, 1891** (except for Competitors residing abroad, for whom an extension of time to the 15th of OCTOBER will be allowed).

The whole of the work, &c., in the SIX COMPETITIONS will be distributed among the little inmates of the principal CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS and KINDRED INSTITUTIONS throughout the United Kingdom.

The above are in addition to the ordinary "Picture Story Wanting Words" and the "Special Home, Foreign, and Colonial" Competitions. Full particulars of the latter are given on page 72.

ANSWERS TO OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES (*Vol. XXXIII., p.* 423).

RIDDLE-ME-REE.—WHALE.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

Ouse. Trent. Avon. Orwell. Medway.

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

'The old house by the lindens
Stood silent in the shade,
And on the gravelled pathway
The light and shadow played."

BURIED NAMES OF GIRLS.

1. Muriel. 2. Kate. 3. Ethel. 4. Eva. 5. Esther. 6. Edith. 7. Ada.

HIDDEN PROVERB.

"Make hay while the sun shines.

WORD PUZZLE.

PERADVENTURE.

FLOWERS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

Candytuft, Primrose, Carnation, Harebell, Hollyhock, Honeysuckle, Wallflower, London-pride, Foxglove.

GEOGRAPHICAL LETTER.

MY DARLING ADELAIDE,—I hear you have been to Perth. My eldest brother Sydney is going to stay with his friend Stewart in Edinburgh. went to a party with Mrs. Cook and enjoyed it very much. My youngest brother Albert came back from his school, Wellington College, a few days ago. With love, I remain yours affectionately, VICTORIA ELTON.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

G-lute-score-shire=Gloucestershire. N-seal-chair=Lancashire. Corn-wall = Cornwall. Horn-tumbler-and = Northumberland. Rod-fox-shire= Oxfordshire.

67, *Gloucester Place, Portman Square, W.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—We lived in India for four years, and we all liked it very much. I was four years old when I went out there; my youngest sister was only a tiny baby. We lived up in the Himalayas, in Simla, where it is only pleasantly hot in the summer, and where the snow lies deep in winter. The monkeys there are as abundant and as tame as sparrows are in England. One day my little sister was dreadfully frightened at seeing an enormous monkey bound in at the window and make a face at her. We all came in to find out what he would do. Presently he spied a large tin of sweets standing in a corner. He soon had it open and was feasting happily. We did not disturb him, for he was so tame and not the least alarmed, though we were quite near him. When he had had enough he stopped and took a look at us, blinking his eyes and making faces. Then he lightly jumped away. The common yellow monkeys are called "bundas," but in the woody part there are a pretty kind called "langoors." They are of a soft, dark grey, with white faces. OLIVE ILBERT (Aged 13).

La Carolina, Prov. de Jaen, Spain.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—The owners of the stage coach which goes from here to Linares have a dog, and last time father went it was frisking about with a little one that belonged to one of the passengers. When they were about two miles from Linares, the little dog was running after the mules, and barking at them, and suddenly the wheel of the coach went over it. Fortunately, the mules were going very quickly, and the little dog was not killed, so its master got out and took it on his knee, but the jolting of the coach hurt it, and it kept howling and throwing itself off, until at last they had to leave it in the road. After a little while the coachman looked back to see what his dog was doing, and he saw him go up to the little dog, and after smelling it, pick it up in his mouth and run after the coach. He carried it all the way to Linares, quite two miles, and the little dog kept quite still and did not whine. We have taken the LITTLE FOLKS for nine years, and we all like it very much. ELSIE HASELDEN (Aged 10½).

Cedar House, Axminster, Devon.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I like LITTLE FOLKS very much. My favourite pieces are "Pickles' Playgrounds," "The Mystery of Master Max," "Young Folks' Ways in Olden Days," and many of the short stories. I also like the Puzzles and "The Editor's Pocket-Book" very much indeed. One day my little sister Dorothy and I were putting scraps into our album, when I dropped the camel's-hair brush I was pasting with. Our cat Bob ran up, and before we had time to rescue it he had eaten it. Dorothy said she thought the brush would have made his tail grow longer, but it hasn't. Dorothy had a pet worm she found. She used to nurse it and pet it; she called it "John Broom," after the hero of one of Mrs. Ewing's stories. She wanted to make it a flannel jacket to keep it warm. Perhaps the thought of a jacket was too much for its nerves; anyhow, Mr. Broom marched off and did not return.

MARY CORNISH (Aged 10¾).

14, *Via Lamarmora, Florence, Italy.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have lived in Florence for three winters, and before that I lived in India, where I was born. I want to tell you about some funny things the children do here. On the day of the Epiphany all the little boys of the town go about blowing glass trumpets quite a yard long, which make a very unpleasant noise. The boys blow them to attract Santa Claus, who is supposed to come to little Italian children at the Feast of the Epiphany, instead of at Christmas. There are two other queer things which are done only in Florence. At mid-Lent the boys make bladders of paper and pin them on to anyone they can get near enough to. I do not know why they do this, but they seem to think it a great joke. On one particular day in the spring, men, women and children all go out very early in the morning, before sunrise, into the fields, and catch as many crickets and grasshoppers as they can, and put them into tiny cages with a bit of lettuce leaf. Then they all go to the Cascine, the great public garden of Florence, where they have a kind of picnic. In the afternoon they open the cages in the woods and let all the insects out. They say that the cricket brings good fortune to the house. ELSIE WARD (Aged 11½).

Corbar Hall, Buxton, Derbyshire.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I think that the readers of LITTLE FOLKS will be interested to hear something that the boys of my brother's school did. They wanted to have a holiday to go and see the Queen launch the two new ships—the *Royal Arthur* and the *Royal Sovereign*. So they telegraphed to the Queen, begging her to ask the schoolmaster to give them a holiday in order that they might go and see the launch. She telegraphed back to the schoolmaster requesting that they might be allowed to do so; also to Admiral Gordon to let them have good places. So they went to Portsmouth, where the ships were to be launched, had a very good time, and saw everything beautifully. WINIFRED M. RIGG (Aged 11½).

5, *Universitätstrasse, Vienna.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I read in the January number of LITTLE FOLKS the anecdote entitled "Beating Bismarck at his own Game," and as I know a corresponding one about Frederick the Great, I send it to the readers of LITTLE FOLKS. One of his soldiers had greatly distinguished himself at the Siege of Prague. The king, having been informed of it, sent for the soldier to appear before him, and, placing the order of the Black Eagle and a bag with a thousand ducats before him, said, "Now choose which you will have." The soldier took the money without a word. But the king remarked: "I do not think it is a great proof of honour on your part to prefer the money to the order." The soldier replied, "Your Majesty, is it honourable to owe money? I took the thousand ducats to pay my debts with. But on the next occasion I will try to deserve the order." The king said, "You are a brave man, and may take both the money and the order."

RUDOLF CAHN SPEYER (Aged 9½).

The Grange Gardens, Alresford, Hants.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—The readers of LITTLE FOLKS may perhaps like to hear about a horse who belongs to our baker. We feed the horses of the different tradespeople who call at our house; they are all very gentle and sensible creatures, and knock on the doorstep with their feet, but one of them takes the door-handle in his teeth, turns it about till it unfastens, pushes the door open, and comes into the lobby as far as the shafts of the van will allow. It is of no use our pushing him back, for he opens the door again and again, as long as his master is away. We always reward him with an apple or piece of carrot for his cleverness. We also have a cat, which stands on his hind legs and knocks at the door with the handle (which is a loose one) whenever he wants to come in. We have taken in LITTLE FOLKS from the time it was first published, and like it very much.

WINIFRED MILLER (Aged 17).

NOTE.—Each Letter sent to the Editor must be Certified by a Parent, Teacher, or some other responsible person, as being both *True and Original* as regards all the facts that are described.

PICTURE WANTING WORDS.

SPECIAL HOME, FOREIGN, AND COLONIAL COMPETITION.

THE Editor has the pleasure to announce a SPECIAL "PICTURE WANTING WORDS" COMPETITION, in which the Readers of LITTLE FOLKS residing on the Continent, in Australasia, India, the Cape of Good Hope, Canada, the United States, &c. (or anywhere abroad), will have an opportunity of competing for Prizes on favourable terms with subscribers living in Great Britain. The Prizes are offered for ORIGINAL STORIES having particular reference to the Picture printed on this page, which are to reach the Editor by the dates given below. In this COMPETITION there will be THREE DIVISIONS: the FIRST DIVISION for Girls and Boys *of the ages of* 14, 15, *and* 16; the SECOND DIVISION for those *of the ages of* 10, 11, 12, *and* 13; and the THIRD DIVISION for those *under the age of* 10. The following is the Value of the PRIZES to be awarded in EACH DIVISION: For the Best ORIGINAL STORY,

a GUINEA Book; for the second best, a HALF-GUINEA Book; for the third best, a SEVEN-AND-SIXPENNY Book; and for the Six next best, FIVE-SHILLING Books. Each Prize will be accompanied by an Officer's Medal of the LITTLE FOLKS Legion of Honour—thus making *in all* TWENTY-SEVEN PRIZES and TWENTY-SEVEN OFFICERS' MEDALS. *In addition to these* some of the more deserving Competitors will be included in a SPECIAL LIST OF HONOUR, and be awarded MEMBERS' MEDALS. All STORIES must reach the Editor by the following dates:—(*a*) From Residents in Great Britain not later than September 9, 1891; (*b*) From Residents on the Continent by October 8; (*c*) From Residents in America (including Canada, &c.), Asia (including India), and Africa, by October 22; (*d*) From Residents in Australasia, &c., by November 7. They should be addressed to "*The Editor of* LITTLE FOLKS, *La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.*," with the words "*Home, Foreign, and Colonial Competition*," written on the envelopes. No Story must exceed 500 words in length; and each must be accompanied by a certificate from a Parent, Teacher, or other responsible person, stating that it is *the sole and unaided work* of the Competitor and *strictly original*. The List of Prize and Medal winners, with one or more of the Prize Stories, will be printed in LITTLE FOLKS for January next. Competitors are referred to a notice respecting the Silver Medal printed on page 143 of the last Volume.

RIVAL MINSTRELS.

(p. 75.)

RIVAL MINSTRELS.

WE were tired of building castles,
So we joined a merry band,
And gave a little concert
On the dry and sunny sand.

We'd a make-believe accordion,
And our banjo was a spade;
'Twas wonderful, considering,
The amount of noise we made!

I forgot the tambourine, though,
And the bones; and for the rest,
How each tried to drown the other
In the song that he knew best.

And soon—would you believe it?—
The crowd, it grew and grew;
For folk will go on listening,
If to something strange and new.

There was one—a real black minstrel—
Who stood awhile to hear;
His teeth looked, oh, so shiny
As he smiled from ear to ear.

We took no people's pennies,
Though for fun we passed the hat;
We'd played for love—not money—
And were well content with that!

ELLIS WALTON.

A VISIT TO THE GULLS' ROCK.

"COME along, Nell; it's no use saying 'no'—you've got to come."

And two strong brown hands caught hold of Nellie's shoulders, and she was pushed along the sands in spite of all resistance, but not far though, for the little lassie was sturdy and had a due respect for her own dignity.

"Stop, Jo, you bad boy," cried she, wriggling herself free with a sudden vigorous twist; "I won't go one step with you, just for your impudence. Look at my pail! you've spilt all my sand. What shall I scrub the floor with now? Oh, Jo, it *is* a shame." And the blue eyes filled with tears for the minute, but they were lit up again with a smile at sight of the boy's rueful look, and she finished by giving him a blow on his back with the empty pail.

"Go and fill it again, you rascal;" and down she sat upon a piece of rock, dabbling her bare feet in the water.

Jo and Nellie had been fast friends for a long, long time, almost before they could remember. It seemed like a dream to Jo, the terribly stormy night when Jack Emery's smack went down with all hands, and his poor wife was brought in drenched with the rain and the sea-spray which had dashed over her while she stood on the rocks watching for him who would never return.

Poor thing! When she sank down exhausted as she entered the door, the kindly hands which unfastened her tightly tied shawl found Nellie closely nestled at her bosom, and by-and-by when the broken-hearted mother was laid to rest, the little one was taken into the hearts of them all at Jo's home, and there she had remained ever since. She was now a bright sturdy lassie of ten years old, and Jo, her champion and chum, was twelve.

"But, I say, Nell," suddenly asked Jo. "What's the use of my filling your pail if you won't come? Do, Nell—we shan't have such a chance for ever so long—do, there's a brick!"

Nellie evidently appreciated the finishing compliment, for she said—

"We'll see, Jo; but I must finish the kitchen first."

"There, then! that's done. Now, Nell, come on;" and away they went over the sands, taking care not to capsize the pail this time.

Very soon the household duties were over

and early dinner done; then the two conspirators went to "Mother," and asked if they might go for a row. As Dad was busy in Bill Benson's smack, helping him with the big trawl, and wouldn't want the punt till next morning, consent was readily got, and away they ran.

The sun had never shone so brightly, nor had the sea seemed so full of tiny ripples, as on the memorable afternoon when Jo and Nellie pushed off in their boat for a row to the Gulls' Rock, a tiny islet with overhanging cliffs, which took its name from the number of seagulls which built their nests in its crevices.

"Now, Nell, you steer and I'll row. Just fancy we're going to be attacked by pirates."

"All right," cried Nellie, her face all aglow with excitement. "I'll bang them on the head if they come here," flourishing the tiller.

The business of steering and rowing, however, sobered them down till they arrived at their destination, and after pulling the boat up high and dry, Jo started off egg-hunting, leaving Nellie in charge of their belongings.

Now, being left to take care of things is all very well, but slow, to say the least of it, and Nellie cast many longing looks at the rocks above her.

"I don't see why I shouldn't try too," thought she. No sooner said than done, and very soon she was scrambling up in right good style, just as nimbly as Jo, every bit.

"Won't he be surprised when he sees me! Coo-hoo! Coo-hoo!" cried she, giving the call used between them whenever they lost sight of each other in the woods or elsewhere.

"Coo-hoo!" answered Jo's voice, much to her surprise below her, but away to the right.

Instinctively turning towards the sound, she looked down and was terrified at finding how far up she had climbed; a feeling of sickness and faintness came over her, and with a wild cry of "Oh, Jo! Jo! I shall tumble," she shut her eyes and clutched on to the almost perpendicular rock against which she crouched.

Hearing the cry, Jo scrambled round to where she was, and in an instant realised the danger she was in.

"Lie down, Nell," he shouted, "you're all right, dear! Keep your eyes shut, and you won't feel so bad. I'm coming."

Very soon the brave lad had reached the beach, and without a moment's delay unfastened the rope from the boat, and rolling it round him to be out of his way, he began his ascent again to where Nellie lay.

Very thankful indeed was the poor little prisoner to hear Jo's cheery voice.

"Here I am," he shouted. "Now lie still," he continued, as he finished making a loop with the rope, round under her arms.

"Oh, Jo, I'm so glad you've come."

"All right, open your eyes, goosie, there's nothing to be frightened of. Begin climbing down now. No, you must go backwards." "Keep looking at the rocks where you put your hands, feel with your feet, and I'll hold on to the rope. Are you all right now?"

"All right," at last she shouted. "How can you manage?"

"I'm coming," was the answer.

Hardly were the words uttered when, to her horror, she saw the lad, who for greater safety had laid himself along the ledge, suddenly overbalance himself, and the next minute he was tumbling over the rocks, till he was landed, as she feared, dead at her feet.

"Oh, Jo! Jo! it's all my fault!" sobbed she as she tried to wake him to consciousness.

Hastily she tore off her pinafore, and dipping it in the water she bathed his face with it, and to her great delight she was soon rewarded by seeing him open his eyes.

"Oh, Jo! are you hurt? It's all my fault."

"Never mind, Nell, we'll soon get home; and I'll be all right," said the brave boy, trying to comfort her; but a cry of pain was the result of trying to get up. However, by-and-by, as fortunately no bones were broken, Nellie was able to half lift him, and leaning on her he managed to get into the boat, which she had dragged to the water's edge.

It was dark when the punt was sighted by the anxious group watching for them. The accident saved them from the scolding which they otherwise would have got, and a few days' nursing made the boy all right again.

Many years have passed since, but Jo and Nellie have never forgotten their adventure. They are married now, and so will remain chums till the end. E. Robertson Croom.

WHO WILL BUY?

ROSES, crimson roses,
Fresh as fresh can be;
Myrtle sweet, marguerites—
Who will buy of me?

Here's forget-me-not, then,
Like the sky above--
Oh, so blue; buy it do,
For your own true love.

"ROSES, CRIMSON ROSES."

Pansies, purple pansies,
Soft as velvet they;
Lilies, too, wet with dew,
And carnations gay.

See the starry jasmine,
Trembling maidenhair,
Mignonette—you'll not get
Finer anywhere.

Take them, while they're blooming,
From the heat and glare;
Take, ah take—they will make
All your home so fair.

Roses, crimson roses,
Fresh as fresh can be;
Myrtle sweet, marguerites—
Who will buy of me?

TO SCHOOL AND AWAY.

By H. ATTERIDGE, *Author of "Bunty and the Boys," "Uncle Silvio's Secret," &c.*

CHAPTER III.—APPLEWICH COURT.

THE garden of Applewich Court was all sunshine. The glass of the hothouses glittered. The stately house showed white through the trees, and from the distance of the fields a cow belonging to the home-farm lowed comfortably. It did not look like a prison; but Gerald thought of Victor Maine, and he entered his new school-house with silent awe.

He and his father were shown across a great square hall into a panelled room. As the boy remembered Victor's warnings, the place seemed to become gloomy, the family portraits frowned, the clock ticked as if every second was answered by a beat of his heart.

Then came footsteps; the door-knob turned, and in entered Dr. Grindham, the sight of whom struck terror to the new boy's soul.

It was not his eyes, though they seemed to look right through Gerald's face into his mind. It was not the height of Dr. Grindham, though he was six feet two and very broad. It was not the short grey whiskers well trimmed on each cheek, nor the bald forehead which the boy supposed to be quite full of learning. It was not the doctor's voice, fearfully distinct and strong. No: it was none of these things that struck terror into Gerald's soul. But it was the university gown the doctor wore, with a red silk hood hanging from his shoulders. The sight of this long black garment made the unfortunate boy feel as if he was ready to sink through the floor.

His father talked to this terrible gentleman without any fear.

"So you have never been at school before?"

Gerald jumped on his chair. He was addressed by the great doctor.

"No, sir," he gasped.

"And are you glad to come to us?"

"I—I—I don't know, sir." This was not the answer they expected, so he added, to pacify the doctor, the best true statement he could think of. "I—I—wish I was, sir."

Doctor Grindham laughed, and said, "My young friend would soon settle down"; and the new boy felt red up to the roots of his hair.

Then Mr. Vincent was sent for. He was a fair young man, with a mild, not to say sheepish, expression of countenance; and Gerald, to his great relief, was sent off with the peaceful Mr. Vincent. He had to say a last "good-bye" to his father first: his father was actually going to lunch with that terrible man, and Gerald was going to the boys' dinner.

A gong was banging and booming, and they soon came upon a crowd of boys passing two and two into the dining-hall. The new comer was introduced to them as "Gerald Brierly," and shown a place at the end of one of the long tables.

He was greatly struck by this first sight of forty boys eating their dinner without talking. He supposed they were brought to such a state of silence, order, and discipline by a long course of what Victor Maine had called "whopping."

The "whopping," boxing, and knuckle-knocking might be true: Gerald did not know yet; and he wondered and trembled. But Victor Maine had surely made a mistake about school dinners. This was excellent. He had not to put the mutton into his pocket, and the pudding was neither india-rubber nor stickjaw.

There was a boy opposite, whom the others called Tommy.

"Are you going to be in my class?" he said.

"I don't know," said Gerald (and how could he have known?). "I've only just come."

Master Sneider, from the left elbow, said—

"Where were you at school before?"

Gerald said: "I have never been away like this. I had a tutor—Mr. Biscop."

"Oh!" from Sneider, a murmur of contempt. He was a gawky lad, with hay-colour hair, open mouth, inquisitive nose, and a general appearance of being all knuckles and elbows. "How many brothers have you got?" said Sneider.

"One."

"Is he come here to school?"

Gerald smiled; he was thinking of Ali Baba.

"What are you laughing at? Where does he go?"

"Nowhere yet," said Gerald. "Why, he is only a year old."

"Oh!" in contempt, from Sneider again. "And do you call *that* a brother?"

Tommy came to the rescue from the other side of the table. "He is not a sister, anyhow."

This put down Sneider for the moment. Then he began again.

"Got any sisters?"

"Yes—heaps!"

"How many?"

Gerald had to stop a moment to count them.

"Five, I think." He was not in doubt, but he was becoming nervous under all the questions, while so many strange pairs of eyes were gazing at him. He only said "I think," as a sort of finish-up to his answer.

But all the boys near burst out laughing, and had to be stopped by a call from the severe-looking gentleman at the reading-desk.

After that, another boy gave the new comer a grand account of the cricket-match on the previous Wednesday, and the new gymnasium, which was always "in full swing" on a Saturday: how Brown minor beat the record with a standing jump; how Jones "over there—he has long legs"—could climb like a spider; and how Jordan's biceps was so big that he could hardly get it into his jacket sleeve.

Here the glowing account was cut short. A silvery little bell sounded. There was perfect silence everywhere in a moment. The reader at the desk said grace, and they all filed out in silence into the corridor.

So far Gerald had seen nothing of hardship or trouble. Where were the bad boys, where the adventures, in such an orderly place? Where was all the dodging the masters, of which Victor Maine had spoken?

"It does not look like it," thought Gerald; "but of course I have not had time to see much yet. They all look as jolly as sand-boys, and they seem to be friends with the masters."

Just at that moment, he and Tommy, walking side by side, were coming towards a boy who was talking and laughing with Mr. Vincent.

"What is his name?" Gerald asked.

"He is Brown minor. But I say, Brierly, we are not allowed to talk in the corridor," Tommy answered. "Of course one can talk to the masters anywhere, but not to each other: that's the rule. I suppose it's no matter when you are a new boy."

"Are there many rules?" Gerald whispered. "Do you keep them all?"

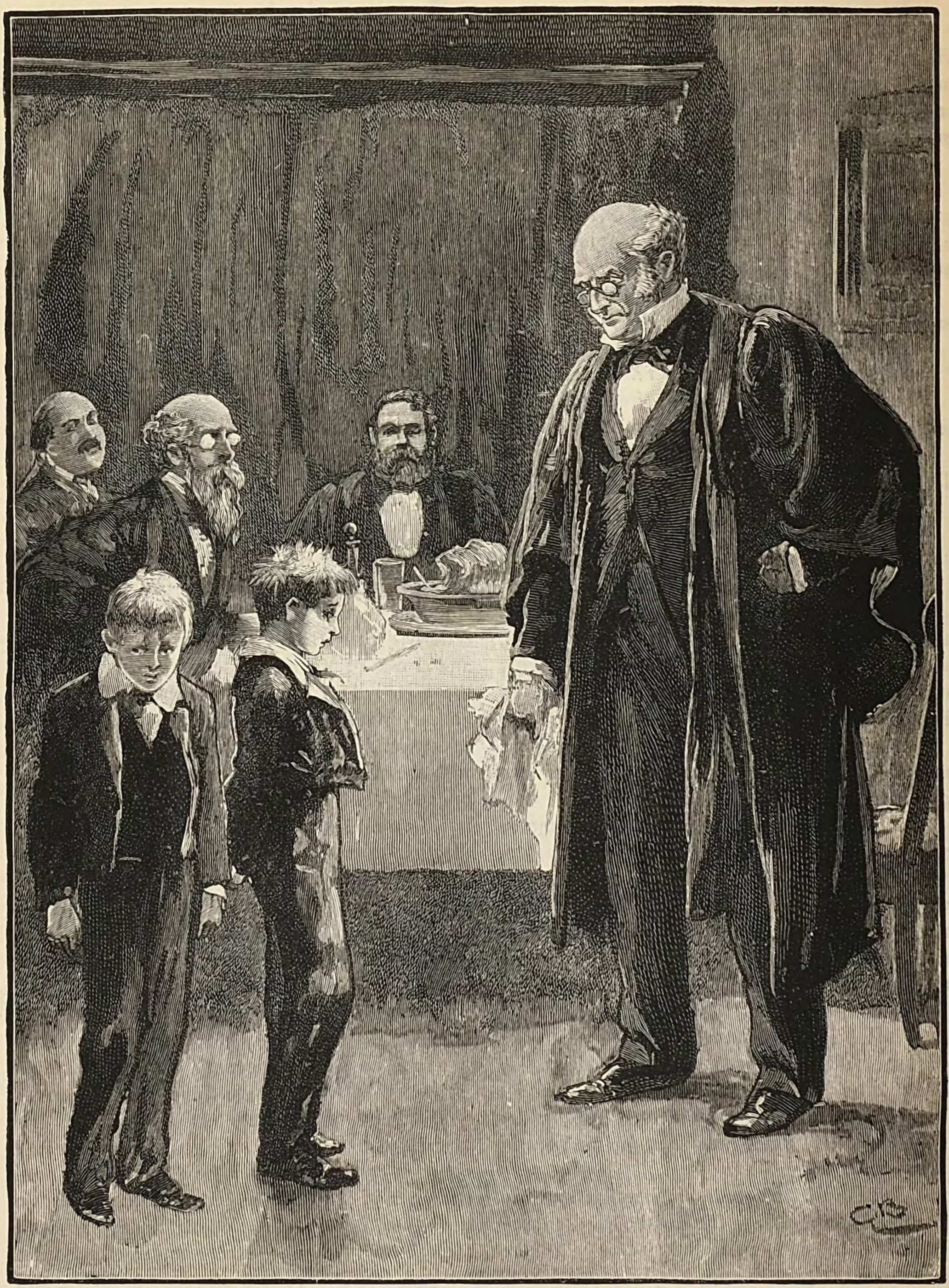
Tommy laughed.

"I try to, but I often get into a scrape. I say, Brierly, don't whisper. They don't like that. We always talk out—not loud, you know, but right out, if we talk at all."

A great many things began to surprise Gerald at Applewich Court. The play-hours were splendid. The class-rooms were bright and orderly, with their windows to the garden and rows of polished desks all round, with the raised desk and chair of the master at one end, overlooking all. Gerald was pleased to get a desk of his own and a whole set of books—with the nice smell of "new book" whenever he opened one. He got his slate too, rather grey, but it would soon blacken; and at the afternoon drawing-lesson he became possessed of new pencils, new drawing-paper, new drawing-board—oh, those delightful new things! And he began to learn to use his pencil, while the other boys were copying from blocks and models, and even from casts of heads and hands and feet, which they drew in charcoal with great skill.

In all other branches Gerald was quite equal to other boys of his age, and he was in a class of twenty, with Tommy for his next neighbour.

Talking was allowed at supper, and the evening recreation was in the garden. The bell rang; they trooped in. The black-looking gentleman read a report, which said in general that the conduct and application of the day had been satisfactory, with one exception, in which case the boy had made very earnest promises, and asked not to be named. Gerald had no idea who this was, but he quaked for the culprit.



IN TROUBLE. (*See p.* 85.)

The terrible Dr. Grindham read night prayers. Why was he terrible? Gerald could not think why; but he thought of Victor Maine, and feared the doctor.

The day had passed quickly. It was bed-time already, in the cool of the summer night. When the gas was out, he thought of all Victor's talk, and listened with dread to his three companions calmly snoring in all the other corners, while the moonlight showed the white curtains and the polished floor, and cast a bright window up the opposite wall and aslant across the ceiling. What about his head going "bang through" up there? What about the blanket tossing? Would some of the other boys burst in soon, and wake up these three tired fellows in the other corners, to join in teasing the new boy?

Then a great bell sounded suddenly, and waking in bright daylight, he could not think where he was.

Why, it was morning, and he had not been tossed in a blanket after all, and the looking-glass showed him that his face had not been blackened either.

When the second bell rang, he was ready to go down to prayers with the rest, to enjoy a quarter of an hour in a run across the play-ground to see the rabbits and pigeons, and out into the garden, where some of the boys had shares in the beehives, and anxiously watched the doings of the bees. Then came breakfast, with the short speech from the dark-bearded master, Mr. Peters:—"From this time—silence!" After the meal, the work in the class-rooms began.

Gerald had a cloud upon his mind. In the garden he had heard Sneider of the gawky limbs and hay-colour hair remark to another lad that "he," Gerald Brierly, was "a duffer—never at school before—as frightened as a mouse; he was always with girls and babies, poor chap!"

Gerald had chanced to hear some of their talk, and when the school day began he felt that the time was come to show some spirit, to conquer the good opinion of the boys. He was all the more keen for it because he began to think that Victor was entirely mistaken about Applewich Court, and that he could safely do anything he liked. What was there to be afraid of? He wanted to be a favourite; Victor had told him how; he would begin at once.

"Can you stand on your head?" he asked Tommy, when they were going along the corridor while the dinner gong was sounding.

Tommy burst out laughing.

"Silence, sir!" Mr. Peters called out.

After a few more paces along the tiles, Gerald asked again, "Will you challenge me to walk on my head?"

"You wouldn't," said the other.

"You challenge me?"

"Yes; I don't believe you will."

"Silence, Tommy Coker!" shouted the voice close behind them.

And the voice went on to say that perhaps Gerald Brierly did not know the rules, as he was a new-comer, but as for the other—"your name shall go down in to-day's report, Thomas Coker. You are teaching this boy, who has just come to us, to break the rules."

This was sharp on poor Tommy, especially as Gerald had both spoken first and begun again, and Tommy Coker had told him the rule only the day before. The new boy began to see that the kind care and cheerful spirit of the masters were only part of the school system; there was strong authority as well, rules strictly enforced.

But Gerald's success in this first slight scrape made him think himself one of those fortunate boys who always escape blame. If the truth were known, these heroes of school pranks who manage to hide their faults are really the most unfortunate of all, the least candid, and the least happy in the end.

Mr. Peters, who looked so dark and grim, gave an elocution lesson that afternoon. It was not enough, he said, to be able to read serious passages in suitable tones; they had now reached in their books a piece by Tom Hood, and to-day's lesson would treat of the brighter manner necessary for a comic subject.

Then he began to read, "Ben Battle was a Soldier bold"; and everybody enjoyed it.

"Now is my time," thought Gerald. "This is the man that has a sense of humour. If I could only get out of the room!"

There was a tap at the door; the housekeeper wanted Master Brierly. He stepped out into

the corridor. Mrs. Weeds was there, in her black silk dress and white cap. Would Master Brierly come and see the shelves and drawers where his things had been put? He was also to choose his new mortar-board cap.

Mrs. Weeds did not let "the new young gentleman" stay a moment longer than she could help; but as they went through the house she wondered why he stopped, and asked, "Is that the store-room in there?"

They were in a dark passage, where a door was half open, as one of the maids was going in; and from that open door came a smell of cake and candles, soap and coffee.

"Yes, Master Brierly," said the housekeeper. "But the young gentlemen aren't ever allowed round this way. You see, we are taking a short way through the house now. I want to be as quick as I can; so we are going up by the back staircase. It is very narrow and dark."

They inspected Gerald's wardrobe, and fitted on the new mortar-board cap, which looked very fine, with its black tassel, and made him proud of being a schoolboy. Then down they came again by the back staircase, to save time; and Mrs. Weeds led him through the private part of the house, and left him in the corridor.

"I suppose you'll find your way now, sir; you know which door it is."

"Oh yes, thank you; I'm all right," said Gerald.

Slowly he went slipping and sliding along the polished tiles. One backward glance: Mrs. Weeds was out of sight. Now for it! He would make the boys think something of him; he would show his spirit.

Down went his arms, and up flew his feet. After a fearful upside-down moment of blood to the head, he propped the soles of his shoes against the wall. Then he flung his heels down again, and stood up, with his hair tossed down on his forehead.

"I must try again. It is such a long time since I did it," he reflected. Then up went his heels again, with his feet resting against another part of the wall. This time, with his face upside down near the pavement, and his heels swinging high above, Gerald managed to move half-way across the corridor on his hands, and then tumbled down, and got on to his feet again.

To his horror, he saw the marks of his shoes in two places on the white wall. "I am making a noise too," he thought. "If I am not quick, they will come out to see what is the matter. Now or never! I must do it! I'll make them think me the jolliest boy in the school. Here goes!"

Gently he turned the door-knob. Without waiting an instant, he wheeled head down and heels up, and moved forward on his hands into the bright doorway. In that fearful position he saw something immensely tall looming over him —somebody in the act of coming out. He went upside down into the arms of Mr. Peters, and sank in a heap at his feet.

Mr. Peters did not laugh; neither did Gerald, who felt as if his neck was broken.

As for the boys, they had not even seen what had happened, for Mr. Peters had filled the doorway, hurrying out to see what was causing the noise in the corridor. But an idea spread that the new boy had been in collision, and had tumbled over, and the whole school was inclined to laugh—not at his joke, but at himself.

Mr. Peters looked very severe as he closed the door behind him.

"This is no place for tomfoolery," he said. "Look at that wall! Have you made those marks with your feet? Look at your clothes! What a state you are in! Go and get brushed; wash your hands and face, put your hair in order. If you are back in five minutes with a decent appearance, I will pass over this—this tomfoolery. You are new to the school, or I would not. Now go!"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Gerald faintly, standing with his hair in his eyes, and his hands all black.

Mr. Peters did not answer. He strode back into the schoolroom, shut the door with a loud bang, and read "Ben Battle was a Soldier bold" all over again in the most severe manner, and ordered Tommy Coker out into the middle of the floor, because he exploded with laughter.

The other boys tittered too. They noticed the dusty marks of a pair of shoes on the breast of Mr. Peters. Tommy, when he came back to his place, sent round the rumour that the new boy must have been standing on his head. It was a broken and disturbed lesson; and Mr.

Peters looked black as thunder, and made a note in his report-book.

In fact, he had looked so angry that time in the corridor, that Gerald was not anxious to come back. He stayed away. He spent a quarter of an hour watching the passage to the store-room, like a cat at a mouse-hole. And when he came at last, he had secured his chance. While Mrs. Weeds was in there, he had slipped the key out of the door, taking care, of course, to leave it unlocked. After that anxious moment, he dashed back to the schoolroom, and arrived very much out of breath at the end of the reading lesson.

The key was in his pocket, and he was ready for more pranks. Thinking himself privileged as a new boy, he was madly following Victor Maine's advice, and ruining his chance of being happy at school.

CHAPTER IV.—CAUGHT.

DURING the evening Gerald could not help confiding his secret to Tommy Coker, and showing him the key.

"Shouldn't like to," said Tommy.

"Oh! I've got pluck enough for anything," Gerald boasted.

The last event every night was the reading aloud of the day's report, in the presence of Dr. Grindham. The doctor was very terrible still to the new boy, for, as Gerald was not in the highest class, he seldom saw him. In the report to-night Thomas Coker was censured for a disturbance in the corridor. Gerald looked hot; he felt that he deserved to be mentioned instead. But then came a few words about the elocution lesson, "completely spoiled by one, for the whole class." The doctor looked calmly round at the crowd. Gerald felt a cold shiver all over him. But the terrible moment passed. He was not named. The report was over.

When the boys trooped away across the hall, and up the broad polished stairs, Gerald slipped away from the rest, and dived into the passage towards the kitchen regions. It was not so dark now. There was a gas-lamp right opposite the store-room door. Nervously he felt in his pocket for the key, opened the door in a moment, carefully took the key in with him, and locked himself in.

"It will take only a few minutes," he thought; "and then I shall run up to room Number Five like a shot."

But he had not light enough. The moon was shining in at the window, but the corners and cupboards were in the dark.

The first great find was the candle-box. He stole out into the passage with a candle, lighted it at the gas, and brought it back—very careful, you may be sure, to lock the door again. Now, what about a candle-stick? There was none to be found, and no time to lose. He dropped the hot wax in a little pool on the table, and stuck the candle fast in it while it cooled.

The smell of soap, cheese, coffee, and spice was overpowering. The sense of doing a daring deed made Gerald tremble, till he wondered what would happen if he fainted, and if nobody ever found him again.

Now to work! There was a bin of flour, and the lid was easily raised. Then he turned to the large cupboard. The boxes and jars were bewildering. He looked and he felt. He nearly caught his finger in a mouse-trap, the wood snapped down and made him jump. But he could not find currants anywhere. Then he thought of Victor's words, and how he said "currants and treacle"; and, never having made cake, he thought one was as good as the other. There was a large white jar here, labelled "Golden Syrup," and another—a big earthen jar—full of honey.

First he poured the golden syrup into the flour-bin. He thought it splendid to see it going down like an amber snake—an immense snake wriggling round and round, as if the end of him would never come, for the jar was very big. Then in went all the honey, in one yellow mass.

Now for mixing it! Off went his jacket and up went his shirt-sleeves, and with his hands he stirred the depths of the flour-bin till he danced on the floor with sheer exertion.

Suddenly there was a footstep outside—a noise at the door. What was that? He turned, and blew out the candle.

The footstep passed by. He was safe, after all. But how was he to get a light again? He

took the candle in his hand—a hand covered with a sticky mass of flour. The moon shone in, and showed him the cupboards, the coffee-mill, the tea-chest, the door.

But what was to be done *now?* When he got to the door, and turned the key, he found that something else was fastening it. Whoever had passed by, had bolted it outside.

Gerald dropped the candle, and stood in the moonlight, clasping his head wildly with both hands. Then with the same hands, which, as you know, were covered with flour, he hid his face, and tried to think. He was trapped, caught, bolted in for the night! What could he do? And again he stared round him hopelessly, and ran his hands wildly through his hair. You may imagine what a pretty pickle he was in by this time!

Try the window! Why had he not thought of the window? He rushed across the room. The window had bars outside.

Then he felt like a prisoner indeed, and sat down on the tea-chest in despair.

"Yes," said Gerald to himself at last. "I must stay here till morning. When the servants come down they are sure to undo the bolt. What stirred? There must be mice here. I wonder; are there rats, or blackbeetles?"

He tucked his feet up on top of the tea-chest, and sat clasping his knees, and feeling that he was the most miserable boy in the world. Oh! why had Victor Maine set him on to do these things?

The boy went through a long hour of misery, sitting tucked up on the tea-box, dreading the night, wishing it over, and yet afraid to think of to-morrow. Little by little the moonlight moved to the far side of the room. The place was becoming quite dark. The distant clock in the hall struck eleven.

Only one hour gone. How frightfully long! What would the length of the night be?

It was a good thing it was early autumn, almost summer. The dawn would come early. Perhaps at six o'clock he might hear the bolt undone, and get out.

He was trying to keep his heart up, when a voice came from somewhere—

"Gerald!—Gerald!"

He started—nearly fell off the tea-box.

"Who is that?"

"It is me," said the voice. Not a very clear explanation, was it? But the voice belonged to a boy, and it spoke through the keyhole.

With one bound Gerald was at the door.

"All right! you are in there!" came from the keyhole. And Tommy Coker, outside, proceeded to say, "Let me in!"

At last Tommy, outside, found the bolt and drew it back, and Gerald opened the door.

"Nobody guessed anything but me," said the faithful Tommy. "The others in our room thought you were with the doctor. He sometimes keeps new boys to talk to. But I wondered when it got late, and you were not coming; and then I remembered you said you had this key, and what you were going to do. And I thought you were staying too long with the jam, so I slipped on my clothes again and came down. I'm glad I did now. Come along, Gerald, quick! The doctor is not gone to bed yet. You'll get into a rare row!"

"Wait a moment. I must put on my jacket," said Gerald.

He groped in the dark, knocking his head against boxes and tables, with a great variety of bumps and groans. At last he found it.

The two boys got out into the passage. Gerald could have caught Tommy Coker round the neck and embraced him: he was so thankful for the rescue. But as soon as they were in the light of the passage, Tommy Coker gave one yell of laughter, and fell against the wall, choking and smothering. He saw Gerald like a white boy, with whitened hair all pushed up on end, and hands spread out, with the five fingers thickly caked. He was enough to frighten the crows, and it was no wonder that Tommy shrieked when he suddenly saw him. In trying to stop laughing, the boy let off squeaks, that were heard in the housekeeper's room.

"Puss!" said the voice of Mrs. Weeds. "Puss! puss! come in!" And the door was opened a few inches.

They had to dash past the door.

"Up the back staircase—here—get along quick!" said Tommy. "I can't help laughing. I couldn't help it then. Why, you are as white as a sheet. Your hair is full of flour. Have you been in the barrel?"

"Young gentlemen!" It was the voice of

Mrs. Weeds from the foot of the stairs. "I must call you back and take your names, if you please, young gentlemen."

"Run! run!" said Tommy; and he was off like a shadow. But Gerald slipped and rolled down, and Mrs. Weeds captured him. Seeing this, Tommy Coker showed true valour by coming back and standing his ground.

"Who is this?" Mrs. Weeds asked of the floury boy, holding him by the shoulder at a safe distance from her black dress. "Goodness gracious me! What a state for a young gentleman to be in! It was you took the key of the store-room, Master Sims. Now, off you come to the doctor this minute; and you too, Master Coker."

"I'm not Sims," began Gerald; "and I'll give you a sovereign——"

He stopped short. He saw that the matron with the rustling silk and white cap was not to be coaxed with money. Tommy Coker trod on his toe, as a warning, at the same moment. So he gave a little screech, and said no more about the sovereign.

"I do believe," said the housekeeper, "it is the new boy. Well, I never, never—I never did—in all *my* life! My goodness gracious! Ah! but the doctor will take it out of *you*, sir. And you too, Master Coker. Come along this minute."

Pleading was in vain, though she nearly smiled at Tommy's coaxing:—"Ah! now, Mrs. Weeds, you wouldn't, would you? Think how it will disturb the doctor. Perhaps he is just having his supper."

No; they were marched away—across the entrance hall, through the library, where the lamps shone softly on dark walls of books, and up to the door of a room beyond. There were pleasant voices inside, and the tinkle of forks.

"Stop, Mrs. Weeds," Gerald gasped, clutching her gown. "Just let me run and brush the flour off first."

"Not on my dress, sir," said Mrs. Weeds tartly, drawing the black silk out of his hand and knocking at the door.

"Come in!" was called. And she pushed both of them into the room before her.

"I am sorry to come so late, sir; but these young gentlemen were caught coming in this state from the store-room."

And Mrs. Weeds bowed and withdrew, leaving them to their fate.

All the masters were at supper — such a terrible array, with Dr. Grindham at the head of the table.

Gerald was ready to cry. Tommy, seeing him again in the full light, was trying not to laugh. He was floured a good deal by his companion, and they looked a sorry pair.

"Stealing! Disgraceful!" said Dr. Grindham, rising from his cold pie to see them better. "Coker—who *is* that boy?"

(To be continued.)

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.

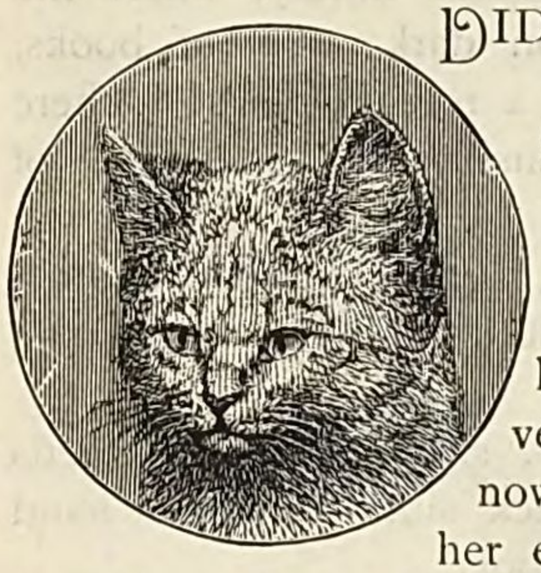
"OH, what an ugly, ugly thing!"
Cried Butterfly with painted wing,
Pausing in wonder near the stone
Where sat Sir Froggie all alone;
"What *saucer* eyes, and what a stare!—
He's quite a monster, I declare!"

"What!" cried Sir Froggie with a grin,
"You don't admire my yellow skin,
My lovely round, protruding eyes,
My mouth of quite unusual size?
Well, ma'am, then I've no time to waste
On callers who've such shocking taste."

DIDO.

A NONSENSE DREAM STORY WITH A MORAL.

By the Author of "Nobody's House," "Little Oddity," etc.



DIDO, the cat, sat by the fireside sorrowfully. She was thinking hard.

Her black lips were drawn down at the corners, the points of her shapely ears were very erect, and every now and then she blinked her eyes as a tear rolled down her soft furry cheeks.

She was a beauty, and she knew it. No common rough cat was Dido. Her fur was soft and thick, a lovely chinchilla grey with black graceful lines, like the pattern on a watered silk. Her feet and lips were as black as a coal, and her breast as white as milk. Her manners too were bewitching.

Everybody worshipped Dido. Why then was she sorrowful as she lolled in luxury on the gorgeous Persian rug by the dining-room fire?

It was because of a boy.

This boy, Pedro, the baby of the house, loved Dido, but he had a strange way of showing it, as little boys often have.

And Pedro was a pickle. He shared all his meals with Dido. Whatever he had, she must have some of it. At first Dido rather enjoyed this, and came regularly to the side of Pedro's chair, but as the little boy grew older, and began to eat many things, poor Dido found she was having a bad time. Bread and jam, egg, fruit tart, and all such things were very distasteful to her, but Pedro rammed them remorselessly down her throat, and if she ran away he was after her in a second, and hauled her back by her tail or her head.

Directly Pedro ran in from his lessons he darted all over the place in search of Dido, and no matter where she hid herself, that boy was sure to find her. Then she had to play all sorts of games with him, most of them of his own composition, in which she had to be a soldier and stand on her hind legs, or a policeman with a staff in her hand, or a sick child in bed with a nightgown on, while Pedro was the doctor, and poured physic down her throat.

Dido was so amiable that she never refused to play with the child, for his brothers were away at school, and she thought he was lonely. Besides, she really loved Pedro, and when you really love anyone, you will do all the things you most dislike to please them.

But she mourned in secret over the bondage to which she had yielded herself up, and the tyranny of Pedro's love.

One day, having played with Dido till he was nearly as exhausted as she was, he went slowly up to his own little room, climbed up on to his comfortable bed, and the next moment was fast asleep with Dido in his arms. Presently, he never knew how it happened, he was in the garden listening to a strange conversation.

"Dido, Dido, why so sorrowful?" It was only three mews, but he seemed to know exactly what they meant.

It was a beautifully shaped coal black cat on the garden wall who mewed.

"My life is made miserable by a boy," Dido mewed back.

"Scratch him, swear at him, bite him. Seek a new home."

"No, no," said Dido, "I love him so much; it would break my heart: cats are not like the fickle human race."

"Then there is only one remedy. The next time your tyrant teases you, mew three times backwards and fly upstairs into Pedro's room. Lie down on Pedro's bed, and when he comes near you pat him three times with your——"

The black cat had gone.

Dido took her walk and went home. Pedro ran after her, caught her up in his arms, and bore her away in triumph.

And then he played the most awful pranks with her. First she was a queen with a crown on her head and a long train dangling about her tail, and she had to sit up on a throne with a sceptre in her paw. Then she was a school-boy, and had to be thrashed for bad lessons.

There was dodging, when Dido tried frantically to escape but never succeeded, for Pedro was as nimble as she, and he darted about, catching her by the tail or the leg and the head, and flung her right over the other side of the room when he caught her near the door, till poor Dido's heart thumped like a steam engine.

"Purr—meow," she mewed piteously. Then she remembered and she altered it to—"Me-ow-purr, me-ow-purr, me-ow-purr."

The little boy stood still for a moment, and Dido quite easily flew across the room, out of the door, and up the stairs as hard she could go, Pedro at her heels.

She looked at Pedro's soft white bed, and was about to jump on to it; but she felt strangely heavy and awkward. However she *climbed* on to it somehow and went sound asleep.

Presently Pedro saw her stretch out a fore-paw and look at it. It seemed funny. She put it down and felt her hind-paw with it. Curious fur this. Soft and clingy at the top, smooth and bald at the bottom.

Then she got up, and felt herself again, and went and took a peep in the glass.

Velvet knickerbockers, black stockings, smooth face, long hair, no whiskers, flat ears, white hands, shoes on feet, no fur. What Dido saw in the glass was just a boy. And he was exactly like Pedro.

She tried to mew, but instead came the words: "Wherever is poor Dido?"

"Then I am Pedro," she said, "and—and—there can't be two Pedros. *Pedro must be me.*"

Yes, sure enough, there was a beautiful grey cat lying on the bed. "It must be Pedro," she said.

"Pedro, Pedro," she cried, darting at him and catching him up in her arms, and squeezing him up tightly under her velvet coat. "Now, we'll have a jolly game."

"Meow," said Pedro, struggling hard to poke his head out and get away, for he found himself turned into a cat sure enough!"

"You do meow nicely," Dido said, "nearly as well as I used when I was a cat. But why are you scratching and fighting and struggling, you stupid darling."

The reason was that Pedro was being smothered. But Dido did not seem to think of that.

Pedro did not know what to think of it. Fancy Dido, in *his* velvet knickerbockers and silk stockings, and his own long golden curls! This was really too bad, and he was just going to tell her so, but when he opened his mouth nothing came out of it but a mew.

And that awful Dido said it was a very good mew, and never understood that it meant, "How dare you put on my things and change yourself into me, and me into you?"

Didn't she understand or wouldn't she? She ought to know mew talk well enough, Pedro thought angrily.

Then it flashed into his mind that Dido used to mew a good deal, *and that he never took any notice of it when he was a boy*.

Presently she loosened her hold and he darted away.

"Gracious! what could it be, that horrible pain in his back?"

Pedro uttered a yell as he felt his tail being torn from his body, and the next moment he was back again in his tormentor's arms.

Then followed a period of torture.

When Dido had crammed so many things down Pedro's throat that he felt like bursting, she espied a mouse in the trap that had been set by a servant, and she dangled it about poor Pedro's nose, and tried to push it down his throat, and worried him with it.

Mewing was no good at all, and poor Pedro couldn't speak a word.

What could he do? You see he had been a cat such a little time that he hardly knew his own powers. But all on a sudden he felt a mad desire to scratch and bite.

Without stopping to think, he flew at Dido's face, that smooth white face with the golden curls hanging round it that she had stolen from him. The next moment poor Dido's face was streaming with blood, and she was uttering the most heart-rending screams. Still Pedro's fury was not appeased. "I'll make you feel," he mewed; "you wicked cruel cat, making me eat mice when I am a boy, and detest them (scratch, claw); how dare you wear my curls! (pulling at them with his fierce claws); let go

of me (snapping and snarling at the fingers which were convulsively pressing into his sides). For all this was said in mews, and Dido did not understand a word of it.

But when Pedro bit her fingers she dropped him hastily, and Pedro, panting with rage, darted away.

Then Pedro's father came in, and seeing his little son (as he thought) all scratched and bleeding, he asked what had happened.

"Pedro, I mean Dido, has been in such a temper, and bitten me and scratched me," howled Dido. Only all the time Pedro's father thought it was really Pedro talking.

"The spiteful wretch! But you always teased her too much," the gentleman said. "Still, if she's vicious, she must be killed."

And then he went away and fetched his gun. Then something sprang up in Dido's heart, her old devoted love for Pedro, and she cried out eagerly, "Oh, please don't shoot him, he didn't know any better; he's only a cat now you know, and cats don't understand——"

"The child is wandering in his head," said Pedro's father, "and Dido *must* be shot."

They had got as far as the dining-room door, where Pedro had taken refuge, and he heard these awful words. Frantically he ran up to his father, rubbed his head softly and lovingly against his leg, and said as plainly as a mew could say—

"I am your own little son; oh, please don't shoot me. You think I am only a cat (I beg your pardon, Dido, but boys are worth more than cats). Can't you hear me tell you that I am really Pedro? Dear Dido, do speak up, and tell him that you are me and I am you."

All this time Pedro's father was pulling his gun about, and peeping into it, and getting ready to shoot. Pedro looked round for a way of escape. There was none; he was shut in.

"Dido, Dido," he implored, the mews becoming piteous screams; "tell him, tell him, dear Dido, and you shall never be teased again as long as you live. Give me back my knickerbockers, and my smooth face, and golden curls, and take your own furry coat. Oh, Dido! *Meow-purr, meow-purr, meow purr.*"

* * * * *

He thought he was mewing, but he was talking all the time, and when he woke up and rubbed his eyes, he was lying on his own little bed, with his arm tightly round Dido's neck, and it was she who was mewing as hard as she could go.

"Did I hurt you, darling?" he said gently. "Yes, dear, I know what cat language means now, and you shan't never be hurted any more. What a horrid boy you were, though. You did worry and tease, but dear old Dido wouldn't scratch me if I teased her ever so, would you, Dido, dear?"

THE CAT'S CRADLE.

I MADE the cat's cradle, I know,
With pleasure and pride, long ago—
It seemed such a wonderful thing,
Contrived from a mere piece of string!

What crossings and turnings there were,
What loops taken up with such care,
What patience to keep the hands right,
Before the loose string was drawn tight!

Though making the cradle seems fun—
One slip, and your work is undone!
And oftentimes started in vain
Must still be attempted again.

Moreover, in my early days,
We made it all manners of ways,
And with sudden movements it took
A new shape before you could look!

They only attained to such skill
Who fixed on the task with a will,
And gave to a failure no heed,
Resolved from the first to succeed!

The cat's cradle brings to my mind
A time that is left far behind—
A pleasure, dear children, I knew
When I was as little as you!

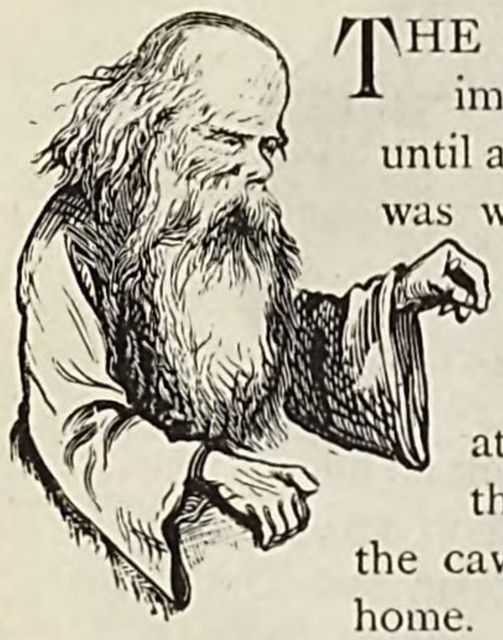
J. R. Eastwood.

A LESSON IN PATIENCE. (*See p.* 88.)

TEE-TO-TUM TALES.

By LUCY FARMER, *Author of "The Little Folks' Peep Show," "The Chronicles of Cardewe Manor," &c.*

II.—THE WIZARD'S CAVE.



THE young people were very impatient all the next day until after our early dinner. It was with difficulty that they could be restrained from rushing off to the cave, and peeping in at the wizard if he were there, or from examining the cavern if he were not at home. Only my firmness kept them in hand, and on this occasion the girls were more inclined to be tiresome than Bobby.

Dinner fortunately occupied them some time, and at length the hour approached.

"Mrs. Farmer, do come—we shall be late," cried Ethel.

"The man will have gone; and if we miss him it will be all your fault," added her sister.

"I shall go in five minutes," remarked Bobby, "whether Mrs. Farmer comes or not—you'll see!"

Fortunately, his patience was not put to so great a trial. Within the time I came down, and we set out.

"Don't hurry now. It is only half-past three," I said. "Look, here is our friend the fisherman. Perhaps he knows the wizard."

"I'll ask him," said Bobby. "Good day," he continued. "We are going to the Wizard's Cave."

"Oh, indeed!" replied the fisherman, looking at me. "And where may that be, master?"

"Why, there by that big rock—don't you know *that?*" said Bobby, pointing to the place.

"Never heard of it, or him," replied the old man. "Must have been afore my time!"

"Never heard of him! Well, he is there, any way. Isn't he, Mrs. Farmer?" said Annie.

"So we are informed," I answered, nodding at the man, for I half suspected some trick. "We are going there, at any rate. Good afternoon."

"Good day, ma'am. Hope you'll find the wizard at home, missie. He, he, he!"

He laughed gently to himself, and plunging his hands into his pockets, left us to continue our way along the strand.

"What a stupid old man!" remarked Ethel. "Fancy not having heard of the Wizard's Cave, where the toys are all washed up!"

"Not *all*," remarked Bobby. "Only some; we must look out for them soon. There is the big rock. No one seems to come here: there are no footprints at all."

"All the better for us, then," said Ethel. "We shall not be interrupted. I suppose this *is* the cavern, Mrs. Farmer?"

"I suppose so; but I do not see your cousin. I had hoped he would be here. Let us wait a moment."

We all peeped into the cave, which was of considerable size. In front were some scattered rocks, over which any person entering the cavern must scramble. The opening was extensive, and the cave extended for a long distance, gradually getting smaller and smaller until the polished bases of the rocks met. Their sides were smoothed and rounded by the action of the tides, which came right up to the inner boundary of the cavern, as could be seen from the drift-wood and rubbish which the last retiring tide had left behind it.

These observations we did not make all at once, but after a while. At first we only peeped in. The cave was not very dark.

"I can't see anyone; can you, Mrs. Farmer?" whispered Annie. "Suppose the wizard plays us a trick?"

"He can't, you stupid!" retorted Bobby rudely. "If he wanted to trick us, don't you think he could do it anywhere? And why should he play us a trick?"

"Bobby, don't be rude," I said. "Let me look in."

There was nothing to be alarmed about: indeed, I must tell you that in my own mind I suspected Master Ernest or his brother of some joke; but neither of them appeared. Bobby and I ventured a little distance into the cavern,

and when the gloom of the upper end became clearer in our eyes, I fancied that I perceived an elderly man, wearing a flowing white beard, seated above us on a ledge of rock. His aged limbs hung down, and were wrapped in a kind of dressing-gown which entirely covered his thin form. He did not move for a moment—in fact, I was rather startled.

"There he is!" whispered Bobby. "Speak to him, Mrs. Farmer."

"It's some trick, dear: let us go on and see."

But we found our further advance stopped by a deep pool of sea-water between the rocks on which we stood and the ledge on which the old man was seated, so insecurely it seemed to me.

My reflections were cut short suddenly by the wizard himself, who in a piping shrill voice cried—

"Come in, Mrs. Farmer; come in, Master Bobby. These are your sisters, eh? Well?"

This certainly was not Ernest's voice, nor Tom's. Bobby looked alarmed, but almost immediately uttered a cry of delight. Both his cousins and the girls were behind us. They had entered after us, unseen by us, and so the wizard had perceived them first.

I was not sorry to see the elder boys, for till now I had suspected them of a practical joke. We were all together now, and I was not at all nervous. The wizard was quite harmless, evidently.

"Does he live here?" I asked Ernest.

"For a while," he replied. "Not all the year, of course. Let's talk to him. Shall I begin?"

"Oh, yes," said Bobby. "Ask him something, Ernest."

"Can you tell us who we are, old wizard?" cried the young man. "Speak out, if you can."

"I cannot speak very well in this damp cavern," replied the old man, coughing; "but I know you all. There is the lady, Mrs. Farmer, the lad Robert, and his sisters Annie and Ethel. Likewise you two lads, whom I knew well before. Bobby is a rude boy sometimes, and teases his sisters too much—he will be punished if he does it much longer. *I* will give him a lesson! Ha, ha! Take care, sir!"

"There, Bobby; he will punish you: so mind!" whispered Annie.

"I don't care," replied Bobby in a low tone, but with a very crestfallen look.

"You don't care!" cried the wizard. "Don't you? Well, then, I will make you care!"

Bobby at once promised amendment, and the wizard proceeded.

"Miss Annie there is not sufficiently attentive to her lessons: I can see that. She must learn her work better, and not be so cross over her sums."

Annie blushed very red in the gloom of the cave. She hung her head as the wizard went on—

"Yes: she must not be so impatient with her brother and sister. He does tease her, but she should not be so quarrelsome, and sometimes rude: you children should bear and forbear. Mind, I have my eye on you!"

"You'll catch it in a minute, Ethel," said Bobby.

"Ay, she must also be spoken to," said the wizard, who seemed to hear and know all that was said. "You must not be so late at breakfast, Ethel. Ah! you see, I know your laziness. Why are you so disobedient? why do you set such a bad example to your brothers and sisters—the younger ones particularly?"

"I am not disobedient," said Ethel boldly. "It is not true to say so."

"Not disobedient!" piped the wizard. "Is it not wilful disobedience to be late at meals when your papa and mamma tell you to be in time day after day? Do you know the Fifth Commandment?"

Ethel was now quite ashamed of herself, and felt inclined to cry. But she gulped down her tears.

"I didn't think of it in that way," she pleaded. "I can't wake up early."

"Are not you called in time, then?"

"Yes, sir," she murmured.

"Then why don't you get up? If I were your papa, I would give you bread and water for breakfast when you are late. He is too indulgent to you all. I will tell him all I know about you!"

"Oh, please, don't!" cried the children. "We will be good: indeed we will!"

"I hope so," replied the wizard, who seemed to become very unsteady. "Let me hear no

more of tying a pewter mug to the dog's tail! Let me not hear of unlearned French lessons, of music unpractised, of temper over sums, of girls stamping and banging doors when rebuked! Who pulls his little sister's hair? Who splashes in the gutter purposely? Who throws stones at the cats and birds? Who got caned at school for telling an untruth? Who——?"

But the wizard said no more for a moment. He suddenly bent forward, and fell, as he was speaking, into the water underneath. As he lay there he screamed: "I'll catch you! I'll punish you!"

"Quick, run!" shouted Ernest. "Make haste, or he may pull us back!"

We all ran as hard as we could when we had clambered over the stones. But when we had reached a safe distance Ernest and Tom lay down on the sand and screamed with laughter. No money was paid, after all!

FLO'S PORTRAIT.

"THERE," said May, in a tone of great satisfaction, as she put the last finishing touches to the drawing—"there, I think that will do." The dog jumped down from the chair, and Arthur held out his hand for the paper.

"It is a little bit like her," he said. "Look at your portrait, old lady. What do you think of it?"

The dog barked and wagged her tail. She did not care a bit about the picture, but she very much disliked keeping still, and she was glad to be released from Arthur's arms.

"Arthur had a little dog,
Its name you know was Flo,
And everywhere that Arthur went
The dog was sure to go,"

said mischievous May, taking up her pencil again. "I had better write that underneath the picture."

"I hope Flo won't follow me one day to school as the lamb followed Mary," said Arthur. "I don't think Mr. Hadden would like that."

May stopped writing and looked at the portrait.

"Arthur," she said, "do you know it really is rather like Mr. Hadden."

Arthur began to laugh.

"It only needs a little alteration," said May, working busily.

Arthur looked over her shoulder, and laughed louder than ever. The picture certainly did remind him of the schoolmaster.

"His name is Arthur too," he said, pointing to the two words which May had written. "You only need add a syllable to 'Arthur had,' to change it into 'Arthur Hadden.'"

May added the letters, and both children laughed again.

"It is a shame to make fun of him," said Arthur. "I like him. I am beginning to think he's very jolly, though he is strict. Wouldn't Walter Fripp laugh if he saw that picture! He always calls Mr. Hadden 'Bow-wow.'"

"We will show it to him," said May.

"Oh no!" said Arthur; "tear it up."

The tea-bell rang, and Arthur ran downstairs. May slipped the drawing into his paper-case, and followed him slowly.

For the time the drawing was quite forgotten. Both children were busy with their lessons all the evening, and Arthur had so many, that he was obliged to get up early the next morning to finish them.

As he was hurrying downstairs, on his way to school, he remembered the portrait.

"May," he called, "did you tear up that drawing?" May did not answer, though she heard Arthur's call.

"I didn't tear it up," she said, as she heard the door bang; "and what is more, I don't mean to tear it up. I'm going to show it to Walter—Mr. Hadden will never know."

She went up to the study to look for the paper. Arthur's pens and pencils were lying on the desk, but his paper-case had fallen on to the floor, and the wind, blowing in at the open window, was scattering the papers in every direction. May shut the window, and gathered the papers together.

"What fun it would be," she said, "if the wind carried off the portrait, and blew it to Mr. Hadden!"

She looked at each paper as she put it back in the case—they were nearly all written on, and the drawing did not seem to be among them.

"That is queer," said May. "I'm sure I put it back in the case. It was a clean piece of paper, too. I hope Arthur hasn't used it."

She began to look more carefully at the papers—she was beginning to feel rather uneasy; then she laughed.

"How stupid of me! Of course he wouldn't use drawing-paper for a lesson."

Then another thought came into her head, and she looked still more uncomfortable.

"He would use drawing-paper for a map," she said. "I heard him saying at breakfast-time that he had had such a hunt for the paper for his map. Oh dear, oh dear! What shall I do if he has used the back of that piece of paper for——"

"May," called her mother, "are you ready for lessons? Miss Jones is here."

May began to tidy the papers, but the governess came into the room before she had finished.

"Good morning, Miss Jones," said May. "Please may I go to meet Arthur at half-past twelve if I get my lessons finished quickly? Flo will want a run."

"But I thought you didn't like going to meet Arthur, because of the other boys," said Miss Jones.

"I want to speak to him about something," said May.

How she got through her lessons that morning May never knew. Though she tried her hardest to give her attention to Miss Jones, her thoughts would wander to Arthur, Arthur's map, and the missing portrait.

"I suppose I must let you go, May," said Miss Jones, "though really——"

But May was out of the room before the sentence was finished.

"Come, Flo," she called to the dog, and together they ran out of the house, and down the street. The boys were out of school, standing in little groups in the playground, when May reached the schoolhouse.

"'I THINK THAT WILL DO'" (*p.* 92).

She looked from one group to another, and quickly came to the conclusion that Arthur was not there. Walter Fripp was standing at the top of the steps, and she beckoned to him.

"Walter," she said, "where is Arthur?"

Walter smiled.

"He was kept behind the others," he said. "Mr. Hadden wanted to speak to him about his lessons—I expect it was something about his map,"—and Walter chuckled to himself.

"His map?" said May, getting very red and confused.

"Oh then, you know about it, do you?" said Walter, laughing. "It was a joke! You should have seen the boys' faces when Mr. Hadden held up the map so that they could see the back of it. Arthur was out of the room, and I don't believe——"

"Where is Arthur now, then?" asked May.

"In there," said Walter, pointing to the schoolroom.

May did not wait to hear any more. For getting her fear of the boys, she ran quickly past them all, quite unconscious of the fact that

they were staring at her, and that Walter was calling—

"May! May!"

She did not stop until she found herself in the big schoolroom. Then she looked about her, half-bewildered.

At the far end of the room Mr. Hadden was standing by his desk, and in front of him stood Arthur. The master was talking earnestly, and as he spoke he lifted his hand to give greater effect to his words. May fancied she saw something in it, and she ran quickly forward.

"If you please, I did it, I did it!" she said.

Arthur turned quickly, and Mr. Hadden looked very much astonished.

"You did it," said the master—"you did Arthur's map? Surely there is some mistake."

"May," said Arthur indignantly, "you did not do it. I got up early this morning——"

"Wait a minute," said Mr. Hadden, for he saw how excited May was. "Now, young lady," he said, "tell me what you did. The map is well done, and I was praising Arthur for it. You don't mean to say that it was not his own work?"

May hung her head, and looked very much ashamed of herself. She had made a great mistake, but it was too late now to draw back.

"The thing I did," she said slowly, "is on the other side."

Mr. Hadden turned the paper over, and for the first time saw the portrait.

Arthur saw it too, and turned scarlet. Then he looked at May angrily.

"I thought that was torn up——"

But he stopped, too much astonished to say more, and looked at Mr. Hadden. Mr. Hadden—Bow-wow, as the boys called him—was not looking angry, not unlocking his desk to take out his cane; he was laughing.

"Is this what upset the boys this morning? You were not there, young man," he said, turning to Arthur, "and I put your map aside and told them I would speak to you after. It really is——" and the master began to laugh again.

May could not bear it. If Mr. Hadden had been angry, she would have neither said anything nor showed that she felt anything; but when he laughed and was kind, it was too much for her, and bursting into tears, she sobbed out the whole story.

"There, there," said Mr. Hadden, patting her on the shoulder, "you didn't mean any harm. It is all right. Take her home, Arthur, and another time look on both sides of the paper before you begin to draw your map."

"I'll fight the next boy who calls him Bow-wow," said Arthur, as the two children crossed the school-yard.

"So will I," said May; "at least, I can't fight, but I'll ask him not to." MAGGIE BROWNE.

LITTLE SAILORS.

WE are little sailors three,
And the brook we make our sea,
Sailing there right merrily,
On a Summer's morning!
Just a piece of board or two
Very well for us will do;
Bold are we, a skilful crew,
Thoughts of danger scorning!

Close beside the bank we keep,
Though the water is not deep,
So that we ashore can leap,
Should we be upsetting!
For we all should scolded be
Did we tumble in the sea;
Gone would be our jollity
Did we get a wetting!

Ah! take care, the breezes blow,
And our boat is frail, you know;
Over surely we shall go,
Greatly to our sorrow!
We had better get to land,
Where we can in safety stand,
Troop off homewards, hand in hand,
Taking ship to-morrow!

EDWARD OXENFORD.

HOW THEY HUNTED AWAY THE HOOPOO.

THE wood was waking up to life. True, that the bright spring sun shone down on a wilderness of still bare boughs. But every day the sap was rising, and the buds swelling, and the network of delicate green leaves growing more and more visible and defined. The wood was becoming noisy too. Where the catkins hung, green and mossy, from the hazel branches, where the blackthorn showed its snowy blossoms against its dark stems, where the buds were largest and fullest, there were hundreds of tiny voices heard, prattling from dawn to dark. "For lo! the winter is past, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of the birds is come."

There was such a meeting and a greeting! For there were travellers who were returned from far-off lands, old summer visitors once more taking up their accustomed quarters, and the regular inhabitants of the wood all the year round. The latter had such stories to tell of the hard winter and the great snowstorm. Then everyone was very busy; there was so much to be done, places to be chosen, nests to be built. All day long the wood was alive with birds, hopping and flitting from branch to branch.

The wren, being the smallest and sauciest bird in all the neighbourhood, was doing the honours of the wood to some fresh arrivals who had congregated near the stream.

"Any news?" asked a flycatcher, a quiet bird in a dull brown suit, with white waistcoat, in a low chirp. "Are the gnats in? I'm come very late this year; but then it's been so cold!"

"I should think they are, indeed! I heard the gardener grumbling about insects already; he'll be glad you've come! The gnats have been dancing in warm corners for ever so long," returned the wren importantly.

"Who's that little conceited creature?" asked a hawfinch, perched on a neighbouring hazel branch, of his cousin the chaffinch, and eyeing the wren rather suspiciously.

"Why, don't you know the little wren?" returned the chaffinch. "I suppose it's because you are such a stranger here. You hide away

so and are so afraid of everything, and don't show yourself. He lives here all the year round."

"Is that why he gives himself such airs, then?"

"I'm sure I don't know. He's such a little bit of a thing, and can't sing a note," went on the chaffinch contemptuously. "But there is some story of an ancestor of his, in one of the rebellions, having awakened the Royalists just in time, when they were surprised by the enemy, by tapping upon the big drum three times with his beak; and the wrens have been thought very highly of ever since. But they can't sing," and the chaffinch cleared its throat conceitedly and burst into a splendid warble. His cousins the hawfinch and the bunting listened admiringly, the latter searching the while for grubs upon a branch, while up a neighbouring tree-trunk a woodpecker sidled slowly down backwards and kept time with its pecking.

When it had thoroughly examined that side of the tree, startling the frightened insects out of their holes by the unaccustomed sound, it flew slowly up to the other birds, a fine beetle on the tip of its long little tongue.

"Such impudence!" it cried, slowly sucking down the tit-bit. "What *do* you think I have found when I went to hunt up my last year's nest?"

"What?" cried all the others in different notes.

"Why, you remember the trouble I took with my last year's nest, in the old oak-tree? *I* don't go and build in any hedge-row or forked bit of branch where every schoolboy can see it," he went on, nodding at the finches and the bunting. "Well, I scooped and scraped out a lovely hole, nice and deep and snug. My fledglings *were* so cosy in it! And this year I thought I would use it over again, to save trouble. So I went and looked it up, and what do you think I found?"

"What?" asked everyone, all their heads cocked expectantly on one side.

"Why, someone had gone and plastered the hole nearly up, so that no decent-sized bird could get in and take possession of it!"

"Ugh!" said all the birds, "what a low trick! No one but a cuckoo would be so mean!"

"It can't be him," said the woodpecker, "the entrance is made too small."

"And, besides, I have not heard him about yet," remarked the yellow bunting. "He soon lets you know if he's come."

"I'm determined to find out who has done this," decided the woodpecker. "After all the trouble I took, I'm not going to be put upon so!"

And he flew slowly off, sweeping up and down, and laughing his low cry; and the ploughman at work beyond the wood said to his mate that there would be rain afore night because the "whet-ile" was a-calling.

The chaffinch and the flycatcher fluttered away to a neighbouring corner, where the larch was slowly putting forth her tassels and the willow was in flower. While the flycatcher halted on a stem of the latter, motionless, on the look-out for passing insects humming unconsciously by, the chaffinch met another cousin, a goldfinch, a very smart fellow in his new spring dress, and stopped to tell him of the trick played on the woodpecker; a great spotted missel-thrush perched on a fir-tree near by to hear the story.

"Well, I never," he cried, in his great loud voice; "I should like to see anyone try that on with me! Wouldn't I just give it them! you'd hear me all over the wood."

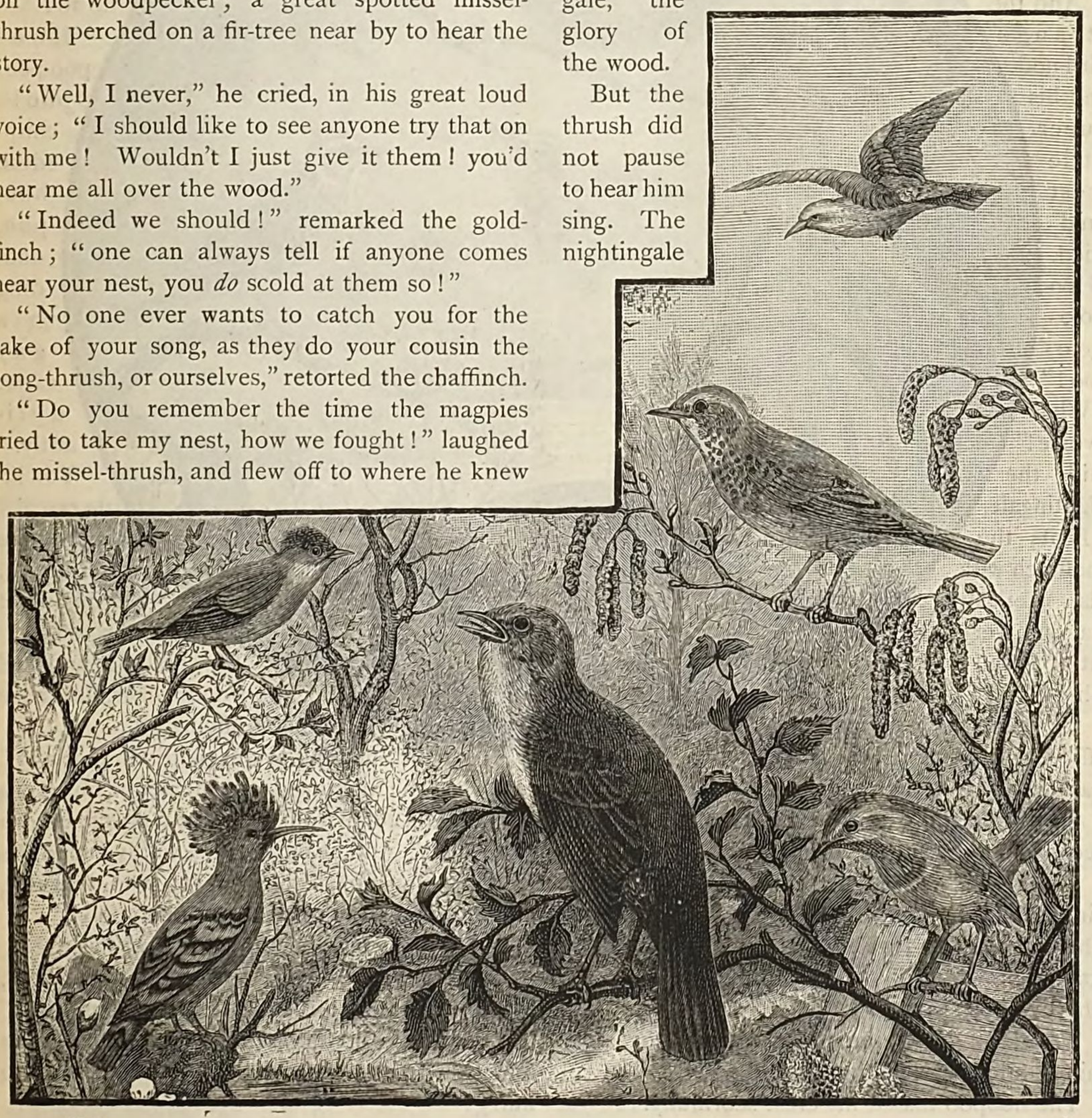
"Indeed we should!" remarked the goldfinch; "one can always tell if anyone comes near your nest, you *do* scold at them so!"

"No one ever wants to catch you for the sake of your song, as they do your cousin the song-thrush, or ourselves," retorted the chaffinch.

"Do you remember the time the magpies tried to take my nest, how we fought!" laughed the missel-thrush, and flew off to where he knew there were some berries left on the mistletoe from Christmas.

But on his way he stopped to listen to a newcomer. In the thickest part of the woods, where in a sheltered corner a few leaves were slyly peeping forth, sat a large brown bird, very dull-looking and uninteresting, and of no very elegant form. But yet there was not a song-bird in the wood, thrush, chaffinch, or goldfinch, that did not give place to him. Even the villagers, on spring evenings, were wont to walk up to the wood, on purpose to watch him flitting about the bare boughs and pouring forth his song. For the plain brown bird was a nightingale, the glory of the wood.

But the thrush did not pause to hear him sing. The nightingale



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was otherwise engaged. Close to him were the wren and his tiny cousin the golden-crested wren, and they were all cross-examining the strangest-looking little bird that the thrush thought he had ever seen. He wore a yellow and black crest on his head and had a bill as long as that of a snipe.

"Who are *you?*" asked the nightingale.

"Never seen *you* here before!" put in the wren.

"What a pert little creature!" said the thrush. "Beats the wren for impudence."

And the strange bird nodded his queer little crest and cried, "Hoo-poo-poo-poo!"

"What a voice!" said the nightingale. "Beats the chaffinch with his everlasting "a very, very little bit of bread and no-o c-h-e-e-s-e!"

"I come from a long way off," the hoo-poo continued, "from a warm country, and I've never been here before."

"I should think it is he has taken the woodpecker's nest," said the thrush.

"Very likely!" said a nuthatch, a handsome bird with an orange breast and a black bill, which flew up at that moment. "It must be a strange bird who did such a thing; none of us who live here would!"

"And he looks impudent enough for anything,' added the golden-crested wren.

The hoopoo tossed his crest scornfully.

"Take one of your nests!" he chirped. "What an idea! Do you imagine I've come here to build. I *never* build in these cold northern countries. I've only come here by mistake."

"Then you'd better go back again as fast as you came!"

"I don't believe a word he says."

"He's a stranger, and *so* odd-looking, there's no saying what he mightn't be up to!"

"Hoo-poo-poo-poo!" chirped the hoopoo, nodding his gay crest defiantly.

"You little rascal!" shouted the missel-thrush, "I'll make it warm for you."

"*I* shall go and tell the woodpecker," said the nuthatch, flying off.

"Sneering at our words in that way," remarked the nightingale. "It can't be much of a country you come from, if you're a specimen of a song-bird!" And he burst into a wildly melodious trill, just to astonish the stranger, who, however, only hopped and chirped "Poo-poo-poo!"

"Why, he's laughing at you," said the wren.

"Get along with you," said the missel-thrush, swooping down upon him. "Let's drive him away!"

"Yes, yes," said the wrens. "Fetch the finches and the flycatcher, and tell the woodpecker to hurry!"

"Be off with you, be off with you, you little piece of pertness!" said the nightingale.

"Be off! be off!" twittered the wrens.

"Off you go!" screeched the missel-thrush.

* * * * *

A few nights later there was an evening party assembled on the edge of the old pond in the wood, where the reeds fringed the shore. The sun was setting in the far, far distance across the swamp. The reed-warbler, who had a deep, carefully-built nest, poised among the rushes, was warbling softly, and the nightjar, emerging noiselessly from the deep retreat where he spent the day, sat uttering his strange cry, like a creaking door, and catching the water insects with his bristle-lined beak. A woodcock, just resting for the night on his way north, flew up from the muddy shore of the pond.

"I saw a hoopoo about here the other day. Never seen one so far north before!"

"That impudent little creature!" said the woodlark; "oh, he's been driven away by a lot of birds who all combined against him."

"Why, what's he done?" asked the nightjar.

"Tut, tut! You lie in bed all day and don't know what goes on in the wood," chirped the woodlark. "He built in the woodpecker's nest!"

"Never," cried the woodcock. "I'm an old traveller and I've known lots of hoopoos. But they don't come up here to build, I'm positive."

"But he did," said the woodlark. "I heard the woodpecker himself say how he found his old nest all plastered up, only a tiny hole left, and ——"

"That's the way stories grow, and mischief is made," said a black starling, dropping down on to a bough above them. "You want to know who's taken the woodpecker's nest? *I* know. I watched, this morning, that little nuthatch running up and down the old oak after insects, with his head hanging downwards." I saw it fix a nut in a chink of the bark and crack it with its beak, and then fly with it into the nest in the old hole, where its mate was sitting. What do you say about the hoopoo now?"

"So much for gossip!" croaked the nightjar, as he flew away. "If that's the way the innocent get punished and the guilty escape, I'm very glad I don't mix with the silly giddy crowd of day-birds!"

EDITH E. CUTHELL.

DISCOVERED THROUGH A CHILD.

WHEN Sir Humphry Davy was a boy about sixteen a little girl came to him in great excitement.

"Humphry, do tell me why these two pieces of cane make a tiny spark of light when I rub them together."

Humphry was a studious boy, who spent hours in thinking out scientific problems. He patted the child's curly head, and said—

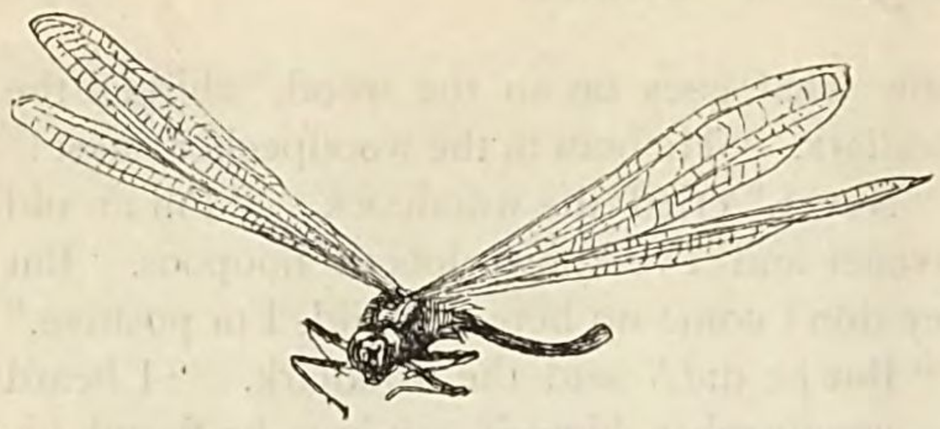
"I do not know, dear. Let us see if they really do make a light, and then we will try to find out why."

Humphry soon found that the little girl was right; the pieces of cane, if rubbed together quickly, did give a tiny light. Then he set to work to find out the reason, and after some time, thanks to the observing powers of his little friend, and his own kindness to her in not impatiently telling her not to "worry," as so many might have done, Humphry Davy made the first of his interesting discoveries. Every reed, cane, and grass has an outer skin of flinty stuff, which protects the inside from insects, and also helps the frail-looking leaves to stand upright.

Talking about children helping in discoveries reminds us of another pretty tale.

In 1867 some children were playing near the Orange River in Africa. They picked up a stone which they thought was only a very pretty pebble, far prettier than any they had found before.

A neighbour seeing this stone, offered to buy it for a mere trifle. He, in his turn, sold it to someone else, and so the pebble changed hands till at last it reached the governor of the colony, who paid £500 for it. This stone which the children had found was the first of the African diamonds.



BY THE MEADOW POOL.

The willows droop their pale green buds above the shining pool,
On its still wave the lilies' leaves are floating white and cool ;
Bright threads of red and orange gleam amid the dark green weeds,
And the warm south wind comes and goes among the rustling reeds.

And as the whispering breezes bend the tall reeds to and fro,
You hear a sweet and pleasant sound like music soft and low ;
It mingles with the drowsy hum of bees among the corn,
And you can listen to this song all through the summer morn.

The dragon-flies flash to and fro with swift and gleaming wings,
They dip them in the water, and it parts in glittering rings ;
Their breasts burn in the noonday sun with crimson, gold, and green :
There never were such jewels in the crown of any queen.

And when the days are warmest, and the sun is high o'erhead,
And the haymakers are resting beneath the elm-trees' shade,
The thirsty cattle know the pool and wander here to drink,
Standing knee-deep in the water or on the grassy brink.

The children from the village love the beautiful old pool,
And linger by its flowery banks as they come home from school ;
The boys launch their ships here, with gay flags flying free,
And dream of one day sailing round the world from sea to sea.

Oh, pleasant is this English land which all of us call home,
And pleasant 'tis in summer time its woods and dales to roam ;
By high-road and by hedge-row, and by waters clear and cool,
When with sweet sounds and happy sights the whole glad world is full.

ROBERT RICHARDSON.

OUR SUNDAY AFTERNOONS.

MY JEWEL CASKET, AND SOME OF ITS WONDERFUL CONTENTS.

By MAGGIE SYMINGTON, *Author of "From Seed to Blossom," "The King's Command," etc.*

VIII.—THE YELLOW TOPAZ.

CHRIST'S little children—those who have learnt to love Him—bear His name on their foreheads.

This is the first jewel I shall show you. There are few lovelier stones than this. In Bible language it is called Holiness, but as one of the jewels in my casket, I shall speak of it as the yellow topaz.

Have you ever seen a yellow topaz? They are like crystallised sunbeams, all bright with yellow flashes.

Holiness is the brightness of God's countenance shining forth from the hearts of those who serve Him. You have seen the sunset light reflected in the water of some wide river or quiet lake, when the glory of one has been as perfect almost as that of the other? Holiness is the reflection of God in the hearts of men, women, and even of little children. How careful we ought to be to keep our hearts pure, and untroubled with the cares of this world; because, just as no muddy turbulent water can reflect the sunlight, so no impure or over-anxious heart can reflect the glory of God.

When Jesus sat among the flowers and talked about them to the people, He told the people—as I am sure you all remember—to be like the flowers, that were always clothed in lovely garb without either toiling or spinning. Mothers who love their children are always toiling and spinning for them, so they often forget that the one most necessary thing of all must come through the peace and quietness of their own hearts. Where peace and quietness are not, God is not either. And how are the little children to see Him if there is no reflection of Him in the hearts of their parents?

I am so sorry for the little people who have to grow up often and often without seeing this image of Him everywhere about them, as it ought to be. Their little hearts have frequently to grope after Him in darkness and pain, when it ought to be as plain to them as possible where and how to see Him. They would have no difficulty at all if the hearts of all about them were still pools, reflecting the beauty and glory of God.

The beautiful yellow topaz shines only when the light falls upon it, so it must be held in the full sunshine before you can understand what it really has in it. I think its depths of colour would delight and astonish you if you could see it in this way, and watch how the inner lights seem drawn out of it by the light from outside, which kindles, as it were, these answering flashes.

It is just the same with holiness; it is only in the full sunlight of God's countenance that its glories are revealed. Its beauties are all the effect of the reflected sunlight of God's face.

"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," and every act of holiness is a revelation, or reflection, of God. We can only see Him by such reflection.

And then let me tell you just one other thing: it is the presence of holiness in the heart—the yellow topaz in the jewel casket—that makes all the other jewels to be of sterling value.

I want to tell you the story of a little man in whose nature lay hidden this precious jewel.

He was a miner. His mother had been a drunken careless woman, and one day when she had been drinking, she let her baby fall out of her arms on to the hard stone floor. He might have been killed, poor little man, but he was not.

Some people said it would have been better for him to have been killed outright, but I think God knew best, and He let the little fellow live.

It was a terribly sad life that was left him, however. His spine had been hurt by the fall, and so he became a helpless cripple for years; then, when he began to grow, he never grew straight and tall like other children, but his back became humpy and his legs remained

short, so that at last when his beard came he was the queerest-looking little man you ever saw out of a fairy story.

He generally went by the name of Little Six-Foot, but in reality he was not more than four feet high. It is a strange idea—is it not? that into the soul of this queer little man had been put a wonderful love for all things beautiful.

He, so ugly himself, passionately worshipped every beautiful thing.

He was ashamed of his own self because of his deformity. It pained him so much to be looked at by others that he became a miner, simply that he might be out of sight.

He loved the beautiful light of day and the glory of flowers and trees, but he shut himself away from them down in the dark mines, because his ugliness made him feel so different from other people. It was, perhaps, foolish of him, some may even call it wicked, but he deserved more pity than blame, I think.

Sore in heart, crippled in body, he thought his presence above ground an offence to those who were related to him.

So he toiled in the dark mines till night came, and then, under cover of her friendly mantle of darkness, he crept home.

When morning came, he was first at the pit's mouth; but, once below, all his fears vanished.

When his pick was in his hand, the lamp which each miner carried was fastened in front of him, and the day's work was before him, my little man knew himself to be the equal of any of the other miners, and that knowledge gave him confidence. He was as capable of accomplishing a good day's work as they were: better, perhaps; but he did not know this.

Down there in the darkness no one seemed to notice that his back was different from anyone else's, that his legs were crooked, his feet too big. It was only when above ground that these defects were remarked.

His companions in the mine liked the little man; they had become so used to his peculiarities that they paid no attention to them. But although the little man thanked them in his heart for making no allusion to them, he did not suppose they were unconscious of them; it needed something to happen to convince him of this. And one day something did happen

There was an explosion in the mine, and all the men in a panic rushed to the cage, shouting to be drawn up. Little Six-Foot was there with them when it was discovered that one man was missing. Who among them should go back into the mine and look for him? So terrible is the result of these explosions sometimes that not a man among them would turn back in the face of what they feared might follow, for a slight explosion is often followed by a far more dreadful one.

Not a man, did I say? Ah well! there was one not much bigger as size goes than half a man—he turned back. And when the last cageful reached the mouth of the pit, there was no little Six-Foot among them. He was not missed, I am sorry to say, for the crowd at the pit's mouth was so big, and the excitement among the women and children so great, as they claimed in eager thankful haste fathers, husbands, brothers. Little Six-Foot had neither wife nor child, and for that reason he thought he had the best right to turn back in search of the missing man. His light had gone out, and he was afraid to re-kindle it, because the striking of a match might cause another explosion. He stumbled along through the darkness, calling upon the name of his comrade. It was some time before he heard a faint response, and then the voice came from the far end of a long passage quite strange to my little man; his work lay in the very opposite direction to this, but he followed without hesitation.

Every step he took brought the voice nearer, but at last he seemed to reach the end of the passage; there was no possibility of taking another step forwards, still he had not reached his comrade. The black darkness surrounded him; he called the man by name again.

"Here I am!"

"Where?" cried little Six-Foot. There was a wall of fallen earth between them, but they could speak to each other through it in raised tones.

"I will do my best to set you free," said Six-Foot. "Let us find the weakest spot, and work with all the energy we can."

"Here, here!" said the other, tapping with his spade to indicate the most likely place, and both fell to, pausing now and again to cheer each other with a word.

The grey dawn was stealing over the upper world when the men at last touched hands through the breach they had made. A little more toil, a little more patience, and they stood side by side, with tears which nobody saw on their grimy cheeks.

The man was saved, and by little Six-Foot.

The whole valley rang with his praises when the golden deed of little Six-Foot became known, and they thought no more of the ugliness of his body after catching a glimpse of the beauty of his soul.

You see, the yellow topaz was in the casket—there was holiness in the heart of little Six-Foot; during his life of suffering the sunbeams of God's countenance had crystallised there; at the right moment the beautiful jewel shone forth, and all the men saw the reflected image of God in the self-forgetfulness of my little man.

LOVE'S ONLYS.

ONLY a word from a glad little heart,
A child's simple word, it is true;
It cheered another young heart that was sad,
And so there was gladness for two.

Only a hand that was outstretched in love,
A wee dimpled hand, it is true;
It helped little Sue, who stumbled and fell,
And so it did service for two.

Only a smile that once met a frown,
A child's sunny smile, it is true;
Away went the frown, the shadowy thing,
And so there was sunshine for two.

Only a song there was carolled and sung,
A child's little ditty, 'tis true;
It woke a sweet chord in a silent life,
And so there was music for two.

Onlys, dear children, the onlys we give,
Are mites in Love's service, 'tis true;
Yet still, 'twill be much to *some* needy soul,
Some poor little only from you.

BIBLE EXERCISES.

13. What centurion treated St. Paul courteously during his voyage to Rome?

14. Where is the ostrich spoken of as being cruel?

15. Where does the Psalmist say that those that seek God with the whole heart and keep His commandments are blessed?

16. Which of the prophets foretell that the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea?

17. How old was Jacob when he said that his days had been few and evil?

18. Where does God promise us that He will instruct and teach us in the way that we should go, and that He will guide us with His eye?

19. Where does Solomon tell us, if we have acted foolishly in exalting ourselves, or have thought evil, to lay the hand upon the mouth in shame?

20. What noted prophet, from a heathen country, said that God's people Israel had the strength of a unicorn?

21. Where does God say that He is the Lord and does not change?

22. Where does Job say that wisdom cannot be got for gold or silver, and that it is more valuable than any precious stone?

23. Where does St. Paul tell us to run with patience the race that is set before us?

24. By which of the prophets did God tell His people Israel that He had caused them to be despised, because they had not kept His ways?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE EXERCISES—1—12. (*See p.* 39.)

1. In St. John xiii. 13. 2. In Gen. iv. 21; Job xxi. 12; xxx. 31; Ps. cl. 4. 3. To Eli (1 Sam. ii. 27, 30). 4. In Eccles. vii. 8. 5. In Rev. xxii. 16. 6. In Nahum i. 7. 7. In Ex. ii. 6. 8. In Rom. viii. 38, 39. 9. In Rev. i. 18. 10. By the prophet Malachi (chap. i. 11). 11. In Ps. cxix. 63. 12. In Prov. xiv. 31.

BUTTERFLY BALLADS.

THE LAY OF THE RED-HOT POKER.

"HAD PESTLE AND MORTAR, AND POT AND PAN" (*p.* 105).

PART I.

HE made mud-pies
'Neath sunny skies,
When he was a boy like other boys;
He loved mud-pies, and he loved a noise.

The Spanish sun
Would bake a bun,
It blazes hot on flower and bud.
(Wherever did he get the mud?)

And yet I say
He loved to play
At those mud-pies the live-long day;
A wilful boy will have his way.

With studious pride
He also tried
Experiments with squibs and rockets,
For which he emptied out his pockets.

Till neighbours moaned,
And jumped, and groaned.
"Oh, what a noise—it took the breath of us!
That horrid boy will be the death of us!"

Yet Pedro's father
Liked it rather,
And said, "This little lad, you see,
Is only fond of chemistry."

But every morning
He gave a warning
Unto his son: "Look here, my joker,
Take care you never heat the poker.

"My son, beware,
My son, take care:
There may be consequences dire;
Don't leave the poker in the fire.'

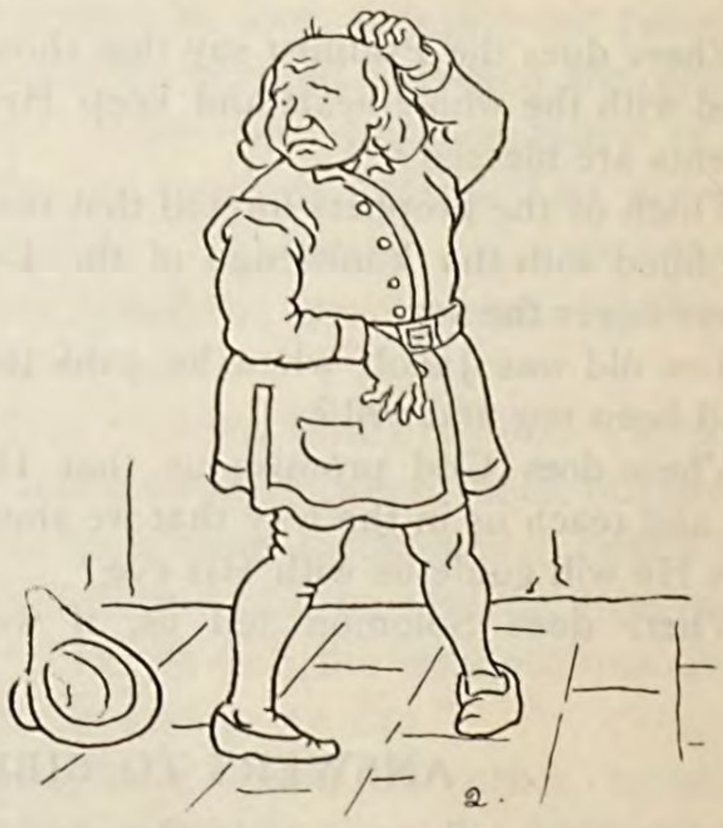
Then Pedro grew,
As most boys do;
And all his youth he did persist:—
"I mean to be an alchemist.

"I tell you so,
And off I'll go,
And as a soldier, I'll enlist,
If I can't be an alchemist.

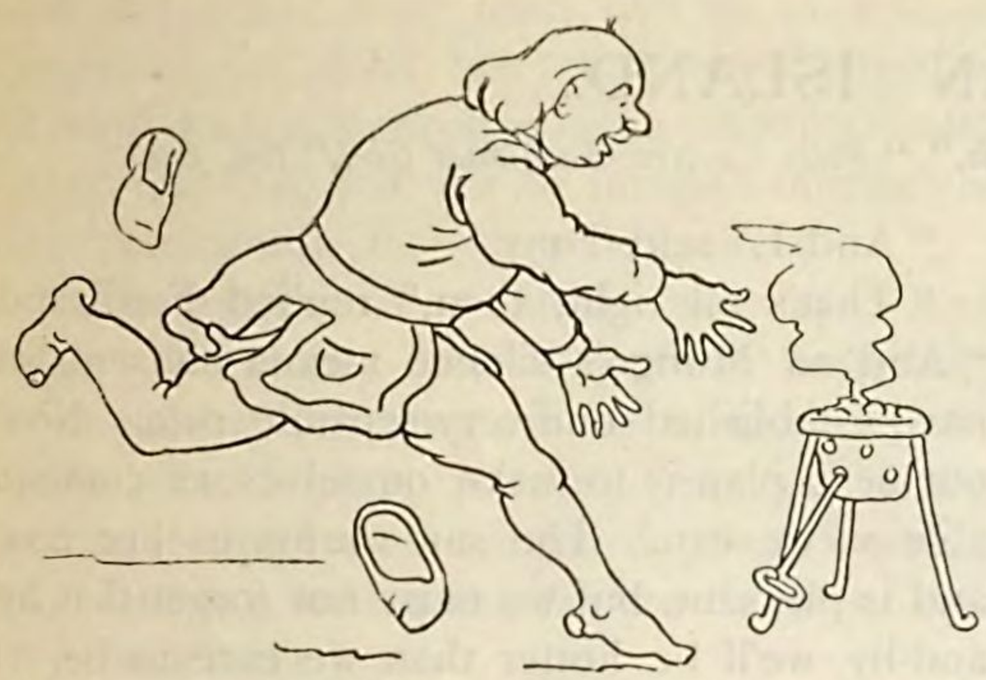
"With time enough,
And books and stuff,
All things the druggist ever sold,
I'll find the secret, and make gold."

His father said,
With a shake of the head,
"You might *make gold* at any trade,
But not as an alchemist, I'm afraid;

"At least, I doubt it;
I don't know much about it.
But, Pedro, whatever you do or do not,
Don't on any account make the poker red-hot!"



"BUT WHERE WAS THE IRON? WHAT SHOULD HE DO?" (*p.* 105).



"THE POKER! WHY WAIT?"

PART II.

Pedro the Alchemist lived in Spain,
Night and day he laboured in vain.
He was making gold,
The people were told.

Striving to make it, day and night,
He could not succeed—not yet—not quite.
And what did he make?
Why—a little mistake.

Pedro the Alchemist, learned man,
Had pestle and mortar, and pot and pan;
He talked like a book,
And he worked like a cook.

His house was like a druggist's shop,
The neighbours said he ought to stop.
But he said: "Not I!
I must try, try, try!"

He made explosions, horrid messes,
Strange smells beyond all earthly guesses:
Pounded and brewed,
And steamed and stewed,

And blew off metal heated to vapour,
And gathered up the dross with a scraper.
"Not yet—by-and-by!—
I must try, try, try!"

Pedro the Alchemist, day by day,
Spent forty years, till his hair was grey.
Said the neighbours, "Stop!
Can't you let the thing drop?

"You cannot make gold, not the size of a button,
Or enough to stand a Spanish nut on,
Not the worth of a penny;—
No one ever made any."

Pedro the Alchemist poked the fire,
"Ah! little they know of my life's desire,
And the mixture new,
Which I think will do."

He made the mixture. "Now, in a minute,
I'll have the secret. I must put in it
Some iron old,
To turn to gold."

But where was the iron? What should he do?
He could not find even a nail or a screw.
The poker! Why wait?
It was stuck in the grate.

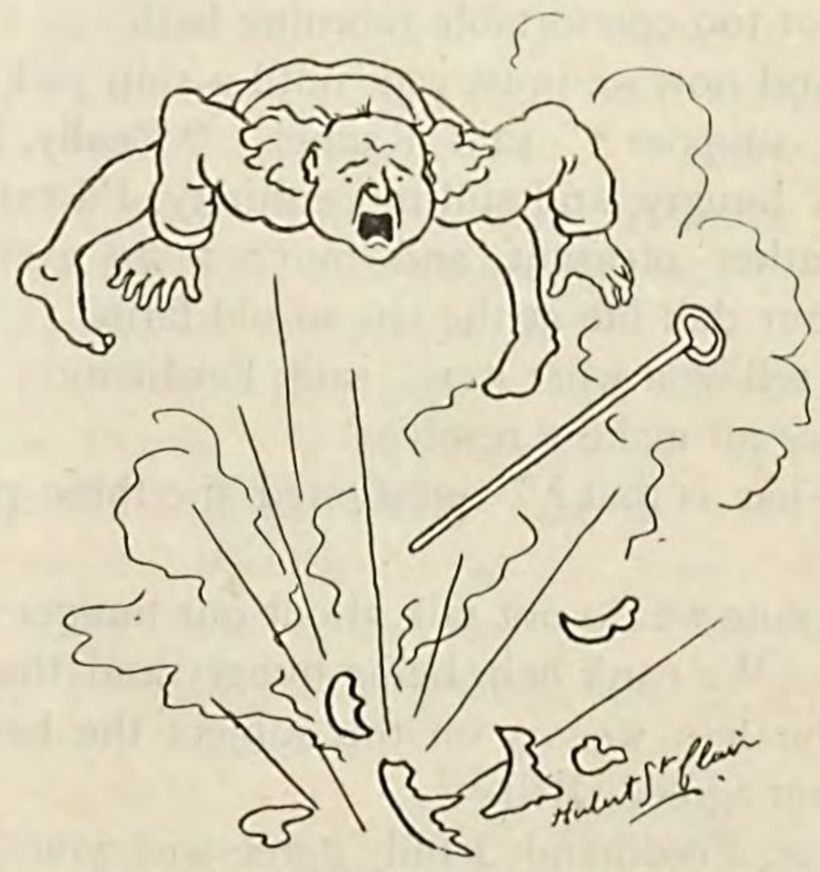
Into the mixture, swift as a shot,
He plunged the poker—alas, red hot!
And like cannon loaded
The bowl exploded.

Pedro the Alchemist soared on high
Out through the ceiling and into the sky.
The terrible noise
Brought crowds of boys,

And women came running, and said, "I wonder,
Was that a gun or a peal of thunder?"
"Thunder! No—louder!
He is blown to powder!"

For the Alchemist's house was flat on the ground,
And Pedro the Alchemist couldn't be found.
But he fell from the sky at Seville,
And, perhaps, he lives there still.

The Moral now:—It is not wise
To spend your boyhood at mud-pies.
But whatever you do, *do not*
Make the poker red hot.



"PEDRO THE ALCHEMIST SOARED ON HIGH."

FOUR ON AN ISLAND.

By L. T. MEADE, *Author of "A World of Girls," "Polly: a New-Fashioned Girl," &c. &c.*

CHAPTER III.—ON THE OPEN SEA.

NIGHT spent in an open boat generally proves a very chilly and dangerous experience. It is apt to produce cold, rheumatism, and in hot countries like Brazil, even fever. All four children shivered, and their teeth chattered audibly before the welcome moment of the rising sun.

Then in an instant all was changed. The sea became a lovely golden sparkling path into the sky, the waves danced, and the crisp early breeze refreshed, while the grateful sun warmed. The children once more attacked the picnic basket—they were very hungry, but they all felt happy from the fact that the night was past, and even Tony was determined not to be greedy, and not to devour one scrap more than his share out of the delicious but rapidly lessening pie.

After breakfast Isabel dipped her pocket-handkerchief into the sea, and washed her face and hands. Rachel did the same, and Tony and Ferdinand also refreshed themselves with this not too comfortable morning bath.

"And now we must wait until a ship picks us up, I suppose?" said Rachel. "Really, if I wasn't hungry, and still more thirsty, I'd call all this rather pleasant, and much more exciting than our dull life at the stupid old farm."

"I tell you what it is," said Ferdinand: "I vote we all make a resolve."

"What is that?" questioned the three pairs of eyes.

"I vote we do not talk about our hunger and thirst. We can't help being hungry and thirsty, but the less we say on the subject the better. Are you agreed, Bell?"

"Yes, Ferdinand, I fully agree with you."

"And so do I," said Rachel.

"And I," said Tony.

"That's all right, then," replied Ferdinand. "And as Mungo's silence means consent, we have established one very sensible rule. Now, our next plan is to make ourselves as comfortable as we can. The sun warms us just now, and is pleasant, but we must not forget that by-and-by we'll be hotter than we care to be. I propose therefore to put up an awning."

"Oh, Fernie! how will you manage that?" asked Rachel.

Ferdinand laughed.

"It partly depends on Bell," he said. "Bell, how much of that striped cotton have you got in your apron pocket?"

Isabel pulled out a little parcel, which contained about three yards of the brilliant striped cotton.

"This is better than nothing," said Ferdinand.

"Very little better than nothing," said Isabel. "The sun will soon find its way through a thin stuff like this."

"Not if we keep it constantly wetted," said Ferdinand. "We must take turns at that. And besides, here are two newspapers, used by cook to wrap up our fowls and pie; they will help to line the back of the awning. Now, let's all set to work. Tony, you must help me to cut this wood into narrow planks; and, Bell, let us all be thankful you were born a housewife, for I am quite sure you have with you at this moment needles, pins, tapes, cotton, scissors, and all the other necessary implements for turning this piece of cotton into a useful awning."

Isabel laughed, took a leather case out of the deep pocket of her dress, and showed Ferdinand that she had started on her picnic yesterday in all respects true to her character.

For the next couple of hours the children were very busy, and before ten o'clock they had erected a very nice little shelter from the fiercest rays of the sun. The awning commenced in the stern of the boat, and reached to the place where the stern oar would have sat had he been provided with anything to row with. The awning was, of course, a great make-

shift, and would have been useless, as well as dangerous, had there been any breeze ; but as all wind had now dropped, the children could crouch under it, and try to imagine themselves more comfortable than they really were.

"This awning is useful in two ways," said Isabel : "it proves that we can do something for ourselves, and also will be a signal to any vessels that happen to come near us. I am certain of this," she continued, with a smile, "for I have a feeling that we really must look very remarkable."

"I do wish that wretched oar had not snapped in two," said Ferdinand, "for then Bell and I could take turns in rowing. As it is, now that the wind has gone down we are hardly moving at all."

"But what a long way we must have come in the night !" said Bell. "I can't see land any where."

She put up her hand to shade her eyes, and took a long look over the great unbroken sheet of water.

"There's a bank of clouds over there," said Tony.

Rachel started up excitedly.

"Clouds !" she exclaimed. "Where? where ? I haven't seen clouds for such a long time."

"Over there," said Tony, pointing westward. "Don't you see—low down and dark ? Why, what's the matter, Fernie ?"

"Only I think your clouds must be land," said Ferdinand. "I'm not sure yet, but I think so. Oh, what a blessing ! for if so, we are drifting towards it. What wouldn't I give for the spy-glass which lies on my dressing-table at home. Now, Tony, if you really don't wish to become luncheon for the sharks you must sit still. Yes, you can watch your clouds, and see them growing into dry land or dissolving into mist, but only under the shelter of the awning. Bell, dear, how hot it is growing ! I am afraid I must begin to pour water over that lovely striped calico of yours."

"I'll take my turn at it, Ferdinand," said Bell. "This old tin can of poor Jim's makes a famous bucket for hauling up the water. You wet our awning the first time, Fernie ; it will be my turn next."

The heat was now so great that Rachel felt sleepy, and it was with an effort that Isabel and Ferdinand could exert themselves to keep the awning wet. Tony, who could stand the heat better than any of the others, still kept his eyes eagerly fixed on the bank of clouds. This did not resolve into mist as they approached it, and in about two hours from the time the little boy had first seen the great dark bank lying against the horizon Ferdinand was able to comfort the others by telling them that they were certainly nearing land.

"Though what land it is I cannot possibly imagine," he said. "If only I had my compass with me I might be able to tell, but as it is I feel cut away from all the little knowledge I possess. That coast, as far as I can make it out at such a distance, is frightfully steep and rugged. It is scarcely likely to be any of the main land."

"A desert island most likely," said Tony, in a voice of rapture. "Oh, I hope so, for if there is a book I love, it is the 'Swiss Family Robinson.' Rachel, wake up, we are close to land, we are close to a desert island ! Look out, Rachel, look ahead of you. There it is ; isn't it grand ?"

"Where ?" said Rachel, sitting up, and gazing around her in bewilderment. "Oh, that land over there. It's miles off. I wish you wouldn't wake me up, Tony. I'm so dreadfully hot, and my head aches so."

"Lie down again, dear," said Bell. "You shall put your head on my lap, and I'll fan you with this bit of newspaper. Now, isn't that better ? Ferdinand, I wonder how soon we'll reach that land, whether it is an island or not ?"

"Not for hours at this rate," said Ferdinand. "The boat is scarcely moving. I almost wish we could get into one of those currents again. It gives one quite a sick feeling to stay perfectly still on this hot oily sort of sea."

"If we only had another oar," echoed Bell. "Now, Fernie, you are very clever, and some of the wood for the famous box you were going to make for me still lies in the bottom of the boat ; can't you splice that poor old broken stump so that I may use it, and so get the boat along somehow."

"I have an idea," said Ferdinand ; "I'll cut a piece off our perfect oar, and splice it on to the other."

SILENT COMFORTERS.

EYES downcast, and pout on lip—
What had vexed her ladyship?
I might ask, and ask away—
Not the least word would she say.

So I made a posy sweet,
From my garden trim and neat;
Took it to her, fresh and fair,
As she sat so sadly there.

Then, in quite a little while,
As I watched, there came a smile;
Quickly all the clouds went past,
And the sunshine beamed at last!

"I wouldn't do that," answered Bell, "for if the worst comes to the worst we can scull with the perfect oar by-and-by, whereas if you injure it we shall be quite helpless in case you fail to make the broken oar of use."

"Well, I'll do my best with these pieces of wood," said Ferdinand. So he cut and hacked and hewed, while Tony watched him with deep interest. Rachel slept on with a feverish flush growing in her pretty cheeks; and Isabel, as she watched the rugged shore coming gradually nearer and nearer, felt her own eyes inclined to close, and her own head growing strangely drowsy.

"What if we never reach land?" she murmured. But then the brave girl roused herself with an effort. "I *will* not, I *dare* not, think at all at present," she determined. "I have just got to do my best, and to keep up poor Fernie's courage at any cost."

Ferdinand's oar was presently finished. It was but a poor attempt at one, but on this calm sea might be trusted to do a little work. Ferdinand slipped it into the rowlock, and then seizing the other oar, began to move the boat forward at a gentle rate. Any motion was a relief, after the long hours of nothing to do. The coast of the land came nearer and nearer, and at last the children were close enough to form some sort of idea of the shore they were approaching.

It certainly looked forbidding. Great straight cliffs descended sheer into the water; these were almost black in colour, and even on their tops were unclothed with either grass or trees. There seemed to be no bay or inlet of any sort, and Ferdinand, as he rested on his oars, could not help glancing at his sister with a look of dismay on his face.

"How are we to land on that terrible shore?" was his unspoken thought. Isabel read what he felt in his face. She shook her head.

"We must not go too near at present," she said aloud; "there are sure to be lots of sunken rocks—see how the water boils and hisses, and how high the waves are thrown up in the air."

"Can't we land now?" said Rachel, rousing herself and rubbing her eyes. "Oh, I'm so tired of this horrid crampy boat, and I'm so, *so* dreadfully——" but then she remembered her promise not to speak of either hunger or thirst, and threw her arms round Isabel's neck and burst out crying.

"I think, Ferdinand," said Bell, "the time has come when we may take the cork out of our one precious bottle of water, and give Rachel two table-spoonfuls out of it to drink. Don't cry, Rachie, dear, you'll be more uncomfortable afterwards if you do."

Rachel allowed herself to be soothed and petted. The small supply of water did her good, and she sat up and took an interest in the wild coast they were coming to.

The little boat was already feeling the influence of the rough waves near the shore. The sea was no longer so calm, and the tiny boat rose and fell in a somewhat alarming fashion.

"No use for the oars at present," said Ferdinand, as he shipped them. "Now the question is can we possibly land on that coast, for if not, we are mad to go any nearer, as those great breakers would soon suck the poor *Nancy* brig to the bottom."

"How far off are we now, Fernie?" asked Tony.

"I should think about half a mile," he answered. "Not more, for the roaring of the surf is so plainly heard. Now if only we had a decent pair of oars we could row round at a safe distance, and look out for a bay. As it is I only see one thing to do."

"And that?" said Isabel. She had a queer sinking at her heart, for Ferdinand's face had grown white.

"I am a capital swimmer," he answered, "I am never tired, and I can duck and dive and bob about, and perform all kinds of wonders. I'll just cool myself with a lovely swim, and come back and tell you all if there is any chance of our landing."

"No, no, Fernie, you mustn't do that," said Isabel. She clasped her brother's hand and held it tightly. The younger children had never seen their cousin so moved. "You mustn't go, Fernie," she said again. "Think, think of the—*sharks!*"

"I must take my chance," said Ferdinand, in a grave voice. "It's just an even chance, Bell, and there is no use shutting our eyes to a plain

fact. I led you all into this, and it is but fair that I should take the greatest risk now."

"But the sharks, Fernie—the awful sharks that can bite your legs off, or swallow you whole," said Rachel.

Ferdinand bent forward and kissed his little cousin.

"You are not too young, Rachel, to know that we are all in danger," he said. "We can't land on these rocks, for we shall be dashed to pieces. We can't stay on in this little boat, for we shall be starved to death. Therefore there is nothing for it but for me to swim about for a little bit, and try if I can find a bay or inlet of some sort. Bell, dear, let go my hand. Bell, be brave, be faithful."

"I will," said Isabel. She gave Ferdinand's fingers a hard squeeze, then helped him to take off his clothes.

A moment later he had taken a long plunge into the waves; they closed over him for an instant; and then his curly head and fair English face were seen. He pushed shorewards with a bold stroke.

Isabel shut her eyes; her lips moved, but no sound came from them.

"I can't sit still," she said suddenly. "I shall take the oars and just paddle forward a wee bit. Tony, you have the sharpest eyes of any of us. Keep a good look-out over the waves for Ferdinand."

The moments that followed seemed very long. They lengthened into half-hours. Isabel did not speak. She tried to keep her fears to herself, but the terror in her heart was very great. Was Ferdinand lost? Should they never see his face again?"

She could have rowed fast in the pain which filled her poor little heart, but she did not dare to strain the weak patched-up oar, nor could she venture to go far from the spot where Ferdinand had left them.

Suddenly Tony uttered a joyful shout; it was echoed back by a voice almost at their elbow.

It's all right," shouted Tony, "the sharks went to sleep, and here's old Fernie back safe and sound."

"Yes, here I am," answered Ferdinand. "You had better all of you keep in the stern of the boat while I scramble back. I'll tell you my news after I've dressed myself. At best I am afraid it is not too cheering."

Tony began to ask a number of questions, but Isabel stopped him.

"You are not to say a word to Ferdinand until he has dressed and rested himself," she said.

Then she unpacked the picnic basket, and taking out the last Brazilian cake, and pulling off one precious banana from the bunch, she gave them to her brother.

"Not a word until you have eaten them, Fernie," she said. "Come, I have to be obeyed this time."

He smiled, and took the food she gave him without another word.

"Now I can tell my story," he said when he had finished. "Not a shark could I see, so I suppose they don't infest these waters so much as one might fear."

"Oh, it wasn't that," said Tony, his eyes dancing.

Isabel put her finger to her lip to silence the little boy.

"Go on, Ferdinand," she said.

"I swam about for a good while," he continued. "The coast is simply horrible. Great rocks rise straight out of the water, and there doesn't seem to be the smallest foothold even for an animal like Mungo to land. The place too, is full of sunken rocks, and the great difficulty is to keep oneself from being sucked in by the swell, which is so strong. If there were twenty men in this boat they couldn't land, and I can tell you I was in a state of despair, and felt inclined to come back to you, and get away from the neighbourhood of this horrible shore as fast as possible."

Ferdinand paused. Isabel's eyes were fixed anxiously on him.

"You didn't come back to us when you were in despair, Fernie," she said, in a gentle voice. "So you must have some hope now."

"Well, yes," he answered, "I just have the ghost of a hope. Just where I should least expect it I found a tiny bay, where the water is deep close to the beach. The sea is comparatively smooth in the bay, for I swam right into it, and I feel if once we were there we should

be safe. The question, however, is this: how are we to get there?"

"Why, in the *Nancy* brig, of course," said Rachel. "You and Bell will use your delightful oars, and paddle us along gaily. Oh, shan't I enjoy a good scamper on dry land once more!"

Rachel turned with a light laugh to Tony. Bell looked into Ferdinand's face.

"There are difficulties?" she questioned.

"There are, Bell, great difficulties, as far as the *Nancy* brig is concerned."

"Ferdinand, what do you mean?"

Ferdinand bent forward.

"Listen, Bell. If we had a proper helm to this boat, and if it were long, and light, and perfect in shape, and if the man at the helm knew every inch of the coast, and we had light, unbroken oars, and men—not a boy and girl—to row them, even then we could not venture near the reef of rocks which guard my bay. No, Bell. The *Nancy* brig is useless. If we are ever to touch dry land we must swim to shore, there is no other way."

CHAPTER IV.—SHOOTING THE RAPIDS.

ISABEL was a good swimmer. She had been brought up by the sea, and could swim like a duck from her earliest years. To swim at home, however, in the safe waters of the old country, to swim for pleasure, was a different matter from swimming now for bare life in these shark-infested waters. To swim helping others along—for she would certainly have to aid the little ones, although they could swim a little—would be no easy task.

There was no help for it, however. They could not stay to die of slow starvation in the *Nancy* brig; they must at any cost make an effort to reach the inhospitable shore.

Isabel and Ferdinand were both brave. They could form a plan and stick to it, and it now seemed plain to them that this dangerous experiment must be carried out without delay.

Bell and Ferdinand once more took the oars, and gently and cautiously, a tiny stroke at a time, guided the little boat over the waters.

They scarcely dared approach even a furlong nearer to the shore, on account of the ever increasing swell, for once the *Nancy* brig got into the trough of one of these great waves all would have been lost, and she would have been sucked down among the cruel rocks in a moment.

It was now growing towards evening, and the fiercest heat of the sun was over.

"We cannot venture any nearer," said Ferdinand. "Ship your oar, Bell; I mean to make use of both these oars to help the little ones along. Tony, you may busy yourself untying the strings of our awning; it has done us good service, and we may need it again."

Tony sprang joyfully up to obey this order.

"Now then, we'll all be as merry as possible," continued Ferdinand, "for a merry heart helps one a long way, doesn't it? I haven't the least doubt, Rachel, that I shall land you safe and sound on that nice shining beach over there, and that Bell will be as successful with Tony, but the difficulty is, how are we to get our things to land? I am almost sure that the land we are so near is an island. I don't see a trace of anybody living on it, so I expect Tony will have his wish, and will find himself on a desert island."

"Oh, Fernie! I hope you are right," interrupted Rachel, "for I just long to live on a Robinson Crusoe Island."

Ferdinand laughed.

"We shall therefore want my carpenter's tools," he said, "and Bell will need her housewife, and I don't believe she will be a bit the Bell we have always known if she hadn't these stockings of father's to go on knitting."

"I should think not, indeed," answered Isabel. "You catch me leaving my housewife and father's stockings behind!"

"But how are we to take them?" said Ferdinand. "As it is we shall have to do without most of our clothes when we strike out into the water. These we may make up into little bundles, and fasten to the oars; but iron tools, what chance have they? and yet they would be so useful."

"And our delicious pie," suddenly screamed Rachel. "There's a good bit of it left still—

and the bottle of water, and the piece of plum cake. Oh, I knew we need not have been so stingy. We shall have to leave the good food behind us, and I do call it a shame."

"Not at all," said Ferdinand. "We'll finish the pie, and eat up the cake, and drink the water. Then we'll wait for half an hour before we take our plunge. But that doesn't get over the difficulty of how the carpenter's tools are to be taken to shore."

"What's this?" said Tony, who had been poking about in the bottom of the boat. He had slipped one of the boards, and from under it he pulled a battered, but fairly whole piece of oilcloth. It was something in the shape of a circular cape, and must have served old Salter as a shelter when he ventured out to sea in the rainy season. Ferdinand seized it now with a cry of delight.

"Why, this is capital," he said. "This waterproof stuff is as light as a feather, and I tell you what I'll do, I'll line the picnic basket with it, and see if I can't contrive to make a floating cradle to carry our precious tools to shore. Well done, Tony."

"I do not believe your cradle will float, Ferdinand," said Isabel; "the tools are too heavy. Listen to me. I have an idea. Is that the bay just in front of us, and are those the reefs of rock? Now, Fernie, how is the tide?"

"Coming in," said Ferdinand. "But can't you see for yourself? It is as much as we can do to keep the *Nancy* brig from rushing on to the rocks."

"And when will it be high tide?" asked Isabel.

"I don't know; to judge from the high-water mark on those rocks yonder we have from an hour and a half to two hours to wait."

Isabel was silent for a moment.

"Tell me the hour now," she asked then.

Ferdinand pulled a little silver keyless watch out of his pocket.

"It is twenty minutes to six," he said. "But what has that to say to the present question?"

"A good deal, Fernie. Everything depends upon the tide now. In the first place, if we swim to shore it is much better to have the tide with us than against us."

Ferdinand raised his eyebrows in a slightly impatient manner.

"What do you mean by *if* we swim to shore?" he asked. "You know perfectly well that we *must* try to swim to shore. We cannot take the *Nancy* brig through that shoal of rocks."

"That is just what I am not sure about, Ferdinand; I am not sure that we are doing the wisest thing in leaving the *Nancy* brig. I remember my father once telling us about a very difficult landing he and some men made in an open boat, and it has just flashed across me that their position was not unlike ours."

"What happened to them?" asked Ferdinand, with a touch of impatience.

"They were afraid of their boat being dashed to pieces on a cruel reef of rocks, and they thought of deserting the boat, and swimming through a narrow opening to the shore. But at high tide the aspect of things looked so different that they trusted themselves to the boat, and came over the reef of rocks without shipwreck. Now what I say is this, let us wait for the high tide before we really decide what to do."

"Yes," said Ferdinand, "but you must remember that the waves have more power at high tide than at any other time."

"I know, but they are with us, not against us. I propose that we do a daring thing—that we get the boat into that rapid, and trust to the force of the tide to carry it through. At the worst you and I can be prepared to jump out into the water at a moment's notice, and to keep the two children's heads up. The chances are that even if the *Nancy* brig is wrecked, we shall find ourselves in the quiet waters of the bay."

Ferdinand was silent for a few minutes. Isabel's scheme evidently struck him as worth considering.

"We run a frightful risk," he said at last, "but I doubt if it is worse than my own proposal, and I own I should much prefer not to give Rachel a cold water bath just now. See how flushed her cheeks are, and her eyes are too bright. I am certain she is not well."

"Oh, she will be all right when she has had a good meal to eat," said Isabel, glancing with

IN SIGHT OF LAND. (*See p.* 107.)

a bright encouraging smile at her little cousin. "Now let us prepare our supper. Rachel, please open the picnic basket."

"We must watch for the high tide," said Ferdinand. "It is nearly six o'clock now," he continued; "the tide won't turn until past eight o'clock. I wonder how far those cruel rocks will be covered. The poor little *Nancy* brig rides the water very lightly, and if we are fortunate she may escape being ripped open."

Rachel was now in high spirits, preparing the meal. It would not have been considered a satisfying supper had the children sat down to it in the comfortable farm parlour. But compared to the tiny supply of food they had lately eaten it was good and satisfying. Mungo came in for his due share, and after the poor little mariners had eaten and drunk, they felt in much better spirits, and more hopeful as to the final result.

The slow moments passed, and about eight o'clock Ferdinand saw that the tide was now nearly full. The underswell was greater than before, and the children had great difficulty in keeping the *Nancy* brig away from the cruel rocks, which seemed calmly to wait for her destruction.

The sun was now riding low in the heavens, but it would not set for at least an hour. Immediately after the sun setting would follow darkness, so the children knew they had about an hour in which to land. Wild and almost ugly as the coast was, the setting sun lit up the whole scene now with a kind of strange beauty. Numbers of sea-birds were screaming and flying about, and a few of them even perched on the rocks between which the children must run the boat.

Isabel was right in saying that the high tide would make a difference in the look of the channel into which they must run the boat. The low rocks were now completely covered, and most of them were so far under the water that the *Nancy* brig might pass over them in safety. The deepest and safest place for running the little boat through the rapid and rushing waters was between two pointed rocks, which stood about six feet apart at their base, but bent grimly towards each other at the top, so as to look something like a broken gateway. Between these rocks the waves rushed fast and deep, and it was here that the *Nancy* brig was to run, either into safety or to a watery grave.

The children had made all their preparations. Ferdinand and Isabel were prepared to spring into the water at an instant's notice. They had each of them secured a little cousin by a stout rope, and if the worst came Ferdinand said he saw no reason why they should not at least escape with their lives.

The great difficulty was to direct the boat into the current which would sweep it through the gates of rock into the calm waters of the little bay. Here was the point where Ferdinand's skill and smattering of nautical knowledge must come into play. The task, to no one easy, was rendered worse by the fact that the children only possessed one sound oar, for the poor patched paddle was absolutely useless in these stormy waters.

"Now," said Ferdinand, as cheerfully as he could, "we must make our grand attempt; we have not a moment to lose. If the tide turns all is lost, and, besides, we must treasure up every scrap of the precious daylight. I am going to scull the boat into that rushing water over there. Bell, will you and the two little ones sit up near the bow. Mungo, my man, look out for squalls. Are you all ready, Bell? Ready for a plunge if necessary? That is right; now then, who's afraid!"

"Shut your eyes," whispered Bell to Rachel. The little girl's face had turned deadly white. She crouched down and pressed it against Isabel's knee.

Bell had shut her own eyes—again her lips moved. She was saying some well-known words—

> "Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,
> For those in peril on the sea."

Memories of the old church in England, and the look of her mother's face, as she sang, came back to Isabel. It was all long ago, but she seemed to hear the rude voices of the village choir. They sounded louder in her ears than the rush of the ocean.

As Ferdinand sculled, the little boat swayed painfully. Then for a second it seemed to steady itself; quick as lightning Ferdinand threw

down his oar, and flung himself full length at the bottom of the boat.

"Keep your eyes shut, and lie down!" he shouted to the others.

It seemed to them all as though they were flying through space. The roaring of the waves in their ears drowned every other noise.

The furious speed, and the loud roar of the waters, in reality, only lasted about half a minute. Once again the boat swayed, rocked, and turned half-round. It was for this instant Ferdinand was waiting. He sprang up, and seizing his one oar gave the *Nancy* brig a sway in the other direction. That movement steadied her. The gallant little vessel was safe in the bay; she was unhurt.

"Oh, shouldn't I like to kiss our dear *Nancy* brig!" said Rachel, when she could raise her dazed eyes and look around her. "Are we safe, Bell? are we really, really on the other side of those horrible rocks?"

"Yes, darling, we really are. Thank Heaven, we have been saved the worst danger. Now, Ferdinand, let me help you to row to shore; as you say, we must not lose this precious daylight."

"No," said Ferdinand, "that is true. Pick up your paddle, then, Bell, and I'll handle the oar. Children, you may sit together in the stern. Now then, here goes. It is a comfort to be in smooth water once again."

All things must be measured by comparison. On ordinary occasions Ferdinand would have pronounced the rolling water in the bay anything but calm, for even here there were white horses, and as the children approached the beach they saw that they must meet a very heavy surf.

"I doubt if we save the *Nancy* brig, after all," said Ferdinand. "And indeed our own landing is not a very easy matter. See how steeply the beach shelves away, and what a frightful power there is in those returning waves. What a mercy that we have got a good piece of stout rope! What a fortunate thing Old Salter stowed it away at the back of the boat!"

"Yes," said Tony, "what a good thing I found it when I poked out the oilskin!"

"I know what I'll do," continued Ferdinand, "I'll weight one end of the rope with my box of carpenter's tools, and fling it first on to the beach, and I'll tie us four together with what is left. I come first, then Rachel, then you, Bell, and then Tony. The moment I land I shall fling myself down, so as to resist the out-going wave, and you, Bell, must do the same. We may not be sucked in very far if we do this, and the instant the wave has gone out, we must spring to our feet, and rush up the beach for our very lives."

"And what about the *Nancy* brig?" said Bell.

"Poor boat, I fear it must shift for itself. Were there two men about, they might give it a good haul up out of danger's way. As it is, we shall be fortunate if we escape with our lives."

"Then I tell you what I propose," said Isabel: "we will put our poor crockery into the picnic basket, and we'll tie the oars and bits of wood to it, and trust to their being floated ashore, for I have an idea that they may be very useful to us in the future. And now, do let's be quick, for I want to tread on the solid earth again before darkness comes on."

"Oh, Ferdinand, your watch!" suddenly screamed Tony. "If you let water get into it, it will stop, and then we'll never, never know the time again."

"Give it to me," said Bell; "I'll wrap it up in my father's long woollen stockings, and fling it on shore. I don't expect it will get much hurt."

The children now paused in their rowing, to tie the coil of rope firmly round their waists, and to secure the tool box at one end. To do this they were obliged to allow a sufficient length of rope to enable Ferdinand to fling it on to the beach. He did so with sure aim, and to the joy of the children the box dropped behind a mound of stones.

"Now," said Ferdinand, "one effort more, *Nancy* brig." His voice was almost drowned in the rush of a great wave. The moment it broke on the beach, the children leaped ashore.

"Down on your hands and knees," shouted Ferdinand. His words did not come a moment too soon. Another great roller broke over the children, sweeping them forward, and then drawing them back with it into the deep waters. They scrambled frantically to their feet, ran a few steps, and then once more lay down to be drenched by their cruel enemy.

But this time they were farther up the beach, and the waves had less power. Once more they ran, stumbling, falling, dripping wet. But now to their delight they found themselves beyond the power of the waves. After more than twenty-four hours of the most terrible adventures they were on dry land once more.

"Let us kneel down and thank God," said Bell. She was the first to drop on her knees; the three others knelt round her. They none of them could say a word, but what matter? God heard the cry from their grateful hearts.

"Look at the *Nancy* brig," suddenly said Tony.

The poor little boat, bottom upwards, lay stranded on the beach. The sight made Rachel burst into tears.

"Oh, come," said Bell, "this will never do. Now that we are safe on shore, we are none of us going to be miserable; and the first thing I propose is that we collect wood from somewhere, and light a fire. We don't know anything about this land, whether there are people on it or not, whether it is an island or the mainland, but we do know that we are all drenched, and must dry ourselves as quickly as possible if we want to escape ague. Come Ferdinand, a run will do us all good. Let us climb up that zig-zag path and see where it will lead us. Come, I am going first. Who will follow my leader?"

Isabel's tone was so cheery that it put life and heart into the others. Mungo, who had landed without the smallest difficulty, ran on first, gambolling and frisking. In Mungo's opinion all their difficulties were now at an end, and he ran on with the assured manner of a dog who felt that his supper and kennel awaited him.

The zig-zag path led to a small plateau, which was surrounded by very high towering rocks. These rocks shut away the last rays of the setting sun. There were, however, some torn and ugly trees about, and any amount of underwood and fallen branches.

"A fire! a fire!" shouted Ferdinand; "we can make a glorious fire here, and encamp quite comfortably for the night. Now we have about ten minutes of daylight left. Let all hands set to work to collect wood."

This command was cheerfully obeyed. Quite a pile of wood, most of it broken and bleached by long exposure, and as dry as tinder, was collected. Ferdinand piled it together with some skill, and Bell flew down to the beach, accompanied by Tony, to see if the picnic basket had been floated on shore. To her joy she found it safe, and opening it she took out a little tin box of wax matches; these had escaped the salt water and were quite dry. A moment or two later the weary children were seated round a roaring fire.

Bell could scarcely keep her eyes open, and all four felt heavy and weary with sleep. They were too tired even to feel hungry just then.

"But we must not all sleep," said Ferdinand; "we must take turns to watch. There may be nothing to harm us either man or animal in this place, still——" the words died on his lips, he started forward, and peered anxiously into the darkness.

(*To be continued.*)

AN OLD FAVOURITE.

ONLY an old wooden dolly,
With an arm and a leg a-missing,
The point of her nose rubbed off, I s'pose,
Through too much washing or kissing.

In a frock of faded satin,
With tinsel lace tarnished and tattered;
Her "coal scuttle" bonnet holds, alas,
A head that's a trifle battered.

Oh, no, she has not lost her locks,
She *never* had curls black or golden:
A doll's wig was safely painted on
In the days that *you* call "olden."

You laugh, and think her "too funny";
Yet *once* she was just as much cherished
As *your* dolly is—by a wee girl
Whose dolly-days long ago perished.

M. Hedderwick Browne.

WHAT THE SHELL SAID

A STORY IN SIMPLE WORDS.

YES, there was no doubt but that at last Dolly *was* tired—and no wonder! for had she not been hard at work for the last two hours on the beach, building a big sand castle?

As she seated herself down on the hot sand to rest, her eye fell upon a large and beautiful shell lying close to her feet, and picking it up, she placed its rosy lips to her ear, and listened to that strange far-off murmur of the sea that is ever to be heard in its shells. What a sweet soothing voice it had! Before long she quite understood its language, and many secrets did it reveal to her of the wide wonderful sea.

It told her of the beautiful caves where the mermaids dwell, and how they lie on soft couches of green seaweed, chanting in sweet low voices their strange unearthly chants.

"SHE STOOD ON THE TOP OF HER CASTLE."

Then its voice seemed to tremble with fear as it described the great and terrible fish that, with one flap of their tails, can lash the ocean into waves as high as mountains.

And oh! what treasures it told her of gold and silver and precious stones (wealth enough to buy a world with, but that may never be gathered by mortal hands)!

But by-and-by its voice seemed to grow sweeter and softer, and it began to sing to enchanting music these words—

"Oh, leave the castle and leave the spade,
And come with me, my little maid,
For down in the depths of the cool green sea
A palace is ready and waiting for thee.
Do not delay,
But come away,
For the sea king waits
At its coral gates
With a crown of pearl
For thee, little girl!"

And what else *could* Dolly do but obey the summons and go to the sea-king's palace?

Soft hands were drawing her down towards the sea: nearer and nearer, till she felt its strong salt breath on her cheek: nearer and nearer, till she heard the long low plash of the little waves as they broke on the golden sand: nearer and nearer still, till she felt their cold kisses on her little hot feet.

At this she shuddered, and with a great start awoke, and lo and behold, it was nothing but a dream!

And instead of her having gone down towards the sea, the sea had, while she slept, been slowly creeping up to the place where she lay.

The only real thing about it all was that in very truth the baby waves *were* kissing her little brown bare feet, and it was the touch of their chilly lips that had so rudely wakened her.

And there on the sand lay the great story-telling shell at her side, just as it had fallen from her hands when she had wandered off into dreamland!

As she stood on the top of her castle watching the tide creeping round it, I think she felt glad that after all she was *not* bound for the palace of her dreams.

But still she could not help wondering what the sea-king really was like.

B.

STORIES OF THE UNEXPECTED.

II.—AN ANCIENT SHEPHERD AND A MODERN PLUMBER.

"OH, Uncle George, do look at the rain," said Charlie, when his uncle entered the breakfast-room next morning.

"Well, what's the matter with it?" said Uncle George, raising his eye-glass to his eye and looking out of the window. "I don't see that it's very different from other rain, do you?"

"But don't you see that it is melting the snow, Uncle George?—we shan't be snowed up any longer; and there's the postman with the letters: it is the first time he has been here so early since Monday morning."

Of course Uncle George and Aunt Mary knew what Charlie meant, but they pretended not to understand that we all rather enjoyed being snowed up at Petherton Lodge. After teasing us for some time by pretending that we certainly could get to the station now if we did not mind wading there, Uncle George delighted us by saying—

"Well, youngsters, you did those tableaux so well last night that I would like to see some more. Easter falls so early this year that I don't suppose any of you will do much work before it comes now, so you may make up your minds to stay here till Tuesday in Easter week. But mind, you must not be idle all day. Lessons of some sort for two hours in the morning, walk and what you like in the afternoon, and some more fairy tales in the evening, if your parents will allow it."

Of course our parents would allow it; they were just as happy as we were, and although two or three fathers had to go to London as soon as the snow permitted them, they were always back in time for the fun in the evening.

When seven o'clock came on Thursday we put everything ready on the little stage, and then called for Uncle George. He was not to be found anywhere.

"It is one of his jokes, I expect," said Cousin Minnie, who generally knew all about his doings. "Let us see if we cannot do one tableau without him: he will be sure to come then."

There was a good deal of whispering and laughing behind the curtain, and we were beginning to be a little impatient, when at last it rose, and we were rewarded by a very pretty scene.

There was a wonderful erection of green cloth, and pillows and beds, which was supposed to be a mountain. At its foot was something which looked like a big stone, and Cousin Jack was walking towards it with a long crook in his hand. He was dressed in a peculiar fashion, quite unlike the present style, and looked as if he had jumped out of Dr. Smith's History of Greece.

"Little Bo-Peep was a girl!" someone exclaimed, and there was a general laugh, during which the curtain fell. It rose again almost instantly. The masculine Bo-Peep was lying comfortably asleep, and his crook was resting against the stone.

"Where are your sheep?" asked Aunt Mary, and then Cousin Minnie's voice replied—

"They are feeding on Mount Ida, ladies and gentlemen; you cannot see them to-day, but you can see the mountain instead. This is not Bo-Peep, but her great ancestor Magnes, a Greek shepherd who led his flocks one day to feed on Mount Ida, and being very tired fell fast asleep. You will please notice that Magnes put down his crook too, but he rested it against a large stone. The crook of course had an iron hook to it."

The next scene showed poor Magnes in puzzled distress. He had hold of the crook, but could not move it from the stone. He gave a good pull and released it, examined the hook carefully with wondering eyes, rested it against the stone again, and tried once more to pull it away; it adhered again, and we laughed till we cried over Jack's comical face as he gave a violent tug, and then went sprawling on his back with the crook in his hands.

"This is not exactly true to life," continued Minnie, "but we must make allowances for the mischievousness of our puppets. Magnes woke up after his nap, and thought he had better go and look for his sheep. When he went to lift his crook he found it stuck to the stone; we are not told that he fell down when he pulled it off, but very likely he did. At all events he was so much astonished to find that the iron would stick to the stone, that he told some wise Greek philosophers about it."

"The magnet!" I said, jumping up in my delight in having found it out, for I never guessed a riddle in my life. "The magnet, after Magnes Bo-Peep's grandfather; that stone must have been a loadstone That is a regular fairy tale."

"And about as true as most of them, I expect," said my father; "but you have done it splendidly, children. What in the world is that noise?"

We forgot to drop the curtain. Magnes jumped off the stage and joined us as we stood listening.

"It is somebody *snoring*," we said at last; and then there was a dead silence which only made the heavy breathing of the sleeper sound louder.

There was a little room which opened out of the front drawing-room, and which was known as the fernery, only there had not been any ferns in it now for some time. It was a favourite hiding-place with us, as there was an outer door to it, though there was only a heavy curtain between it and the drawing-room.

Into the fernery we went in search of the sleeper, and there we found him. It was Uncle George fast asleep in an armchair. Oddly enough he left off snoring when we went in. The light was dim, and we were just turning to go back to the drawing-room and leave him to finish his nap in peace, when Jack exclaimed—

"I do believe Uncle George is doing a tableau all by himself. Look here, he has got a big soup ladle in his hand, and he's not dressed like Uncle George a bit—he has a horrid old coat on and——"

Bang went the ladle on the ground, making us all start; and Uncle George, with his eyes still shut, got out of the chair and began feeling about on the floor. He picked up the ladle, and then felt all round again before he opened his eyes and laughed at us.

"Well, you do look puzzled," he said. "Don't you know who I am? I am a Bristol plumber named Watts. For years I have been making lead shot. I had to cut the sheets of lead into small cubes, which were put into a box and sent whizzing round and round till the corners were worn off and they became round.

"It was a tiresome slow way of doing things, and it worried me to think that I could not find out a better. So I thought about those little lead shots till one night I dreamt about them. I thought I was soldering something on the roof of the church; all on a sudden my foot slipped, and the ladle of boiling metal fell into the street.

"In my dream I went to pick it up. I found the ladle empty, of course, but instead of finding a silvery pool of lead as I expected, I found thousands of little tiny round things just like shot. When I woke up I can assure you I felt very sad to think it was only a dream, but then I thought perhaps there might be something in it after all, so I made up my mind to try to act my dream.

"I found that the result was the same waking or dreaming—dropping the melted lead from a height made it round."

"That's why they have high towers then to make the shot in," said Cousin Charlie.

"Yes, some of them are nearly two hundred feet high, and the liquid lead drops from the top through different-sized holes into tanks of cold water at the bottom. Perhaps you would like to know that I made ten thousand pounds by that dream."

Aunt Mary seemed to be afraid that we might all begin to think our dreams meant something after that; so whilst Mr. Watts went away to change his clothes she reminded us that such dreams were very uncommon, but that all of us could "*do* noble things, not dream them all day long."

"You can go back into the drawing-room," said Uncle George, putting his head round the door again when we thought he had gone. "You have been up in the skies just now; next time you will have to keep your eyes on the ground."

E. M. Waterworth.

LITTLE INTRUDERS. (*See p.* 122.)

THE LAND OF FAIRYFIELDS.

H dear!" sighed little Dick Redway. "I can't do my sum, though I've tried, and tried, and *tried!*"

"Dick," cried his sister Lil, running into the room, "you may come for a walk with me and Christabel if you like."

The children had a great reverence for their big sister Christabel. To begin with, she was *almost* fourteen; but Lil and Dick loved her best because of the stories she told.

On the very day of which I am speaking she told them two or three beauties, all "out of her own head."

"Now," said Lil, "tell us another; tell us one about Huckleberry."

You must understand that Flo and Dick lived in the country, and their home was quite near a range of hills which were called the South Downs. Huckleberry was one of the hills: it was taller than the rest, and the children had often wanted to climb right to the very top and see what was on the other side.

"On the other side of Huckleberry," said Christabel, "is the Land of Fairyfields. It is a beautiful place, ruled over by the fairies. To ordinary people, Fairyfields is but a little village, and the king and queen, and the royal children, are only like everybody else. But those who have the fairy eye see wonderful things."

"Oh!" said little Lil, "how *beautiful!* I wonder if mine is the fairy eye?"

"The entrance to the king's dominions," went on their sister, "is guarded by a black and white dog whose tail has been clipped; his name is Toby, and people who meet him as they go up Huckleberry may be sure that they have a fairy eye."

That night Lil was frightened to death by seeing a white figure beside her cot. But it was only Dick.

"I say, Lil," he whispered, "how would you like to come with me to Fairyfields?" Lil clapped her hands together softly.

"Oh, Dick," she whispered back, "that will be beautiful! Shall we go to-morrow?"

"I'll see," said Dick grandly, and then he pattered back to his own room.

Next morning, quite early, two little figures crept downstairs and out of the house.

"It's a sunshiny morning," said Dick. Why, Lil, you've got your best frock on."

"Of course I have: that's because I'm going to see the fairies. And here's my doll Maria. She's going too, and she's got *her* best frock on, and her petticoat with a real lace flounce. I wish that you had put on your best velvet suit: the fairies will think you a very shabby boy."

"No, they won't," returned Dick; "besides, I've got my new knife in my pocket, and the purse Uncle Tom gave me, with a half-sovereign in it. So the king and queen will know I'm not a *poor* boy. Lil, suppose we have breakfast?"

"It's too early yet. Why, we are not even at the foot of Huckleberry."

"Well, let's see what's in the basket."

"Don't, dear Dick," pleaded poor Lil, holding the handle tightly; "because if you peep, you will want to taste. You're such a greedy boy."

"Well, but do say what you have in it."

"There's a piece of cold pie, and a little roll, and a bottle of milk, and"—very solemnly—"two cheese-cakes and a jam puff."

"Cheese-cakes," said Dick, with brightening eyes; "you are not half bad—for a girl."

As the hours went on the sun grew hotter and hotter, and the children more and more tired. At last, when they were on top of Huckleberry, they sat down under a bush and had their meal.

"I expect," said Dick, as he munched his pie, "that they will be looking all over the place for us. Won't it be fun to-night when we go home, and tell them we've been to the land of Fairyfields? Why, Lil, jump up, jump up! There's Toby."

Sure enough it was. There, right in front

of them, was the black and white dog, with a clipped tail.

"We'll follow him," whispered Dick, taking hold of his sister's hand. "Be very quiet, because he's a magic dog, and noise might frighten him."

So on they panted, keeping close on the heels of the magic dog.

Presently Toby turned down a lane which was dark with trees, whose branches made a sort of roof, through which you got peeps of bright blue sky.

At the end of the lane, sitting on the thick soft grass, was a party of men and women. They were not a *bit* like royal folk; but then, you know, fairies are fond of disguising themselves and coming out in silk and jewels just at the last moment, when least expected. The women wore bright-coloured frocks which had once been smart, but were now torn and dirty; their hair was black and hung in long plaits, and they wore gold ornaments at their ears and neck.

Toby went up to them and made himself quite at home; so the children knew they had come to their journey's end at last.

"You speak," said Dick, who was a shy boy. He pushed Lil forward—she had the prettiest manners in the world.

So Lil made a deep curtsey, and said—

"If you please, is this the Land of Fairyfields?"

"What land do you say, my dear?" asked one of the women.

"The Land of Fairyfields, where the fairies live. Christabel told us about it, and so we came—my brother Dick and I—to see the royal family. You need not be afraid of telling us who you are, you know," she added confidingly, "because we've got the fairy eye, and knew Toby at once."

"That's right, little lady," said a tall man who stood near. "You've found the Land of Fairyfields, and I'm its king."

"Are you? Dick, this is the king. And please, your Royal Highness, where's the queen?"

"There she is," laughed the king, pointing to an old woman who was stirring a saucepan which was hung over a fire of sticks.

"Indeed," said Lil politely. She was far too well-bred to look surprised. Still, it *was* rather strange that the queen should trouble herself about cooking.

"And now," said the king, who didn't seem a bit haughty, "you must be tired after your journey, and dinner's just ready."

"You must excuse Dick's shabby coat," apologised Lil, who was a regular chatterbox, as they took their seats under the trees; "he—he was afraid of spoiling his velvet. But I have on my best frock, with a lace tucker, and my new shoes, and even Dick's brought his knife with four blades, and the purse Uncle Tom gave him, with a real half-sovereign inside. And when dinner is over, shall we go up to the palace?"

"Of course," said the king, in his jolly way.

All this time the children were trying hard to eat their dinner, but found it not at all nice.

"You are not getting on," said the queen herself, just at this moment.

"I don't like stew," said Dick sulkily.

But polite Lil smoothed over his gruff speech.

"Perhaps it is because we've never been at a royal banquet before," she said sweetly, "or we are not used to fairies' food.

By the time dinner was over the sun was beginning to sink. Then the king began to talk of the palace, of the ball that was to be given there that very night, of the beautiful frocks the fairies would wear, and the glittering jewels.

"But we shall not have time to go," cried Dick, who found his tongue at mention of such splendour, and felt cross to think that he was sulky at dinner-time.

"Oh yes, you will. Fairies can do anything. Time will stand still till the ball is over. You will be home in time for tea."

"But, first," said the queen, "their clothes must be changed into fairy garments."

It ended by Lil taking off her frock and shoes. The queen took charge of them. As to Dick, they said his suit was too shabby to bear changing—he must have a new one; so he lent his sovereign purse and pocket-knife to the king, who was to show them to the royal tailor as a sign of good faith.

Then the royal party went off down the lane, promising faithfully to be back with two shining ball suits in less than twenty minutes.

Of course they did not come—you may have

guessed by this time that they were *really* gipsies, and very dishonest gipsies too.

When night came on the children were cold and tired, and frightened.

"We shall die, and be buried by the robins, as the Babes in the Wood were," sobbed Lil.

"No, we shan't," said Dick stoutly, though he pressed his knuckles into his eyes to keep the tears back. "We'll get home somehow. Oh, Lil, darling! try to cheer up, or I shall always blame myself for bringing you here. I *have* been a silly boy. I don't believe the king was a king at all."

"And the queen?" cried Lil, stamping her little shoeless foot, "was an ugly old tramp!"

* * * * *

"How thankful I am we have found you at last!" said a man's voice. And there stood—not the King of Fairyfields, but their own papa, who had been hunting for them all day.

And when they got home mamma was so glad to find them that she forgot to scold.

But Christabel said she *never*, never would tell them fairy tales again, for fear of losing them altogether.

ALICE L. DUDENEY.

FROM OVER THE SEA.

II.—A LETTER FROM JACK.

ONE of the largest and most wonderful automatic machines in the whole world is the postal system of Great Britain and her colonies. Your letter written, your stamp affixed, and nothing remains but to drop your correspondence into the slot of the nearest scarlet letter-box, and at once are set in motion the wheels of a mighty machine, that neither tires nor rests till the missive is delivered safely, as addressed.

Perhaps, little folk, you never gave much thought to this subject, nor considered how far in every sense a penny so spent will travel—all over England, Scotland, and Ireland; while for twopence-halfpenny it will go to the very ends of the earth. I am intending to relate to you some of the adventures that befell a letter which started from that part of the Queen's dominion known as the Great North-West of Canada, and when you have come to the finish you will say, I am sure, that it saw a great deal of the world for the money.

Picture, if you can, hundreds and hundreds of miles of mountains, forests, and prairie, covered to the depth of many feet with white untrodden snow; for it is winter, and the cold is intense.

A few log huts scattered about here and there amidst all this solitude represent the entire white population—men who are bravely trying to make a living as trappers of wild animals, woodsmen—"lumbermen" they are called, or small farmers.

It was from one of these isolated log houses that my letter started on its journeyings—a long affectionate letter of Christmas greetings from a dutiful son to a loving mother, who, far away in busy London, was thinking of her boy "Jack"—written with ink made from a mixture of gunpowder and water, and a pen manufactured from the feather of a wild duck shot that morning. So intense is the cold even close to the large wood fire, that the writer sits dressed in furs; and that the ink may keep from freezing, it stands in the cracked cup which serves for ink-pot upon the hot hearth, almost touched by the blaze.

In these wild outlying districts there is only one mail a month, so that the letter must start at once if it is to reach England by December 25th, and as this particular hut was nine miles from the nearest post-office, the writer, after sealing down the envelope, prepared to set out and take it there.

He slipped his snow-shoes on to his moccasin-covered feet, and taking his trusty gun from its peg, stepped out into the wilderness of white, and was soon speeding along amongst the forest trees. At last, after a long struggle with the icy

wind, the low log hut called the post-office is reached, and the letter handed to the postmaster, a rough unshaven backwoodsman, who brands it with a stamper, and places it in a leathern bag.

From that moment the letter ceases to belong to Jack, and is now Government property, to be kept and guarded as something sacred till its journey is accomplished.

Presently up dashes the mail sleigh, with its four steaming horses—the driver and two unfortunate passengers enveloped in furs: a mass of snow and icicles. The leathern bag is tossed aboard, and with a "Whoo whoop" the willing horses have dashed off, and Jack's letter is on the first stage of its travels. Then deeper and deeper falls the snow, slower and slower go the tired steeds, then finally, in spite of all encouragement, they come to a stand-still.

They will have to turn back, you think; not so. Telling his passengers they must shift for themselves, for that he is going to "get" with the mails, the driver proceeds to mount the freshest of his team, and with the precious bags slung in front of him, makes a push for the railway. Now, riding in Canada during such weather is daring, dangerous work, and many is the brave fellow who has lost his life in the discharge of this duty.

You will scarcely believe it, perhaps, but men have sometimes been brought in by their sagacious horses sitting upright in their saddles quite dead, frozen with the cold, but still grasping tightly the bag of letters entrusted to their care.

Yes, you see, in spite of everything the mails must go forward—the giant automatic machine is not to be stopped by a snowstorm.

At the railway station our mail-man is relieved of his load, is assisted from his exhausted horse, and with rubbing externally, and hot coffee within, life is restored to his almost senseless limbs. As for our letter, that is hurried away by an official, and with a quantity of others is securely fastened into a strong bag known as a "pouch," and is then hoisted up on to a sort of gallows, called a "crane," by the side of the railway lines.

That seems a stupid sort of thing to do to help a letter on its way towards England.

Yes; but things are seldom what they seem, you know. Wait and see what happens when the mail train rushes through. Instead of stopping, it thrusts out a great iron arm, called a "mail catcher," and with it snatches the pouch from off the post in a twinkling, and places it safely inside the carriage, where a clerk is waiting to receive it. That is not such a very stupid arrangement, after all.

Inside the carriage the pouch is opened and its letters tossed out upon the narrow table fitted up in the car for the purpose, where the clerks stand in readiness, and rapidly sort them and tie them up into packages, and place them in sacks ready for the next change of hands.

And now there happened to this particular mail train something that unfortunately will occasionally occur.

The clerk stands holding Jack's letter in his hand, reading the address, when—hark!—what is that? The shriek of an engine's whistle—then a terrible grinding noise, and a vibration that causes the carriage to shake as if it would fall to pieces. There is shouting and a stunning report, and the next instant Jack's letter falls from a lifeless hand, with a red stain upon the envelope that tells a sad tale, not to be dwelt upon here.

A collision?

Yes, you have rightly guessed. All is now bustle. Axes and crowbars, wielded by willing hands, are at work to extricate the unfortunate people, the mail is rapidly collected, and with the least possible delay despatched by the best means available to the nearest post-office. Four hours after the accident, while sufferers still lie groaning from their injuries, the letters are embarked in another train, and hurrying eastward as fast as steam can bear them.

It must be something more terrible than a railway mishap to prevent the delivery of the Royal Mail. And now the sea-coast comes in sight, and the harbour, where, amongst the forest of masts, spars, and ropes, lies the great ocean steamer that will act as the bridge by which Jack's letter is to cross the Atlantic, that divides one mighty continent from the other.

The sacks of letters are carried on board, and with all care counted and stowed away in a part of the ship made expressly for that purpose, and called "the mail room."

Here for a time we lose sight of our particular letter, but we know all the same that somewhere amongst those hundreds of others it lies secure,

and will be undoubtedly attended to and sorted out when the right time comes.

Then a great throbbing is felt throughout the mighty ship, as, with pennons steaming to the breeze, her anchors are lifted, and at the word of command the engines put into motion, and will unceasingly continue to revolve, driving her through the blue salt water, headed for England.

Storms may be encountered, and all sorts of unforeseen dangers besides, but clear heads and brave hearts bring the good ship through all, and in about six days' time the voyage is over, and the rocking motion of the vessel exchanged once more for the clattering of the railway train bound Londonwards.

The next time our letter sees daylight is in the great General Post Office at St Martin's-le-Grand, London. Here it is again sorted, and after passing through several hands, falls finally into the care of a brass-buttoned official with a shiny peak cap, who is a well-known familiar friend to all of us—the postman. He is the last Government official who handles our correspondence.

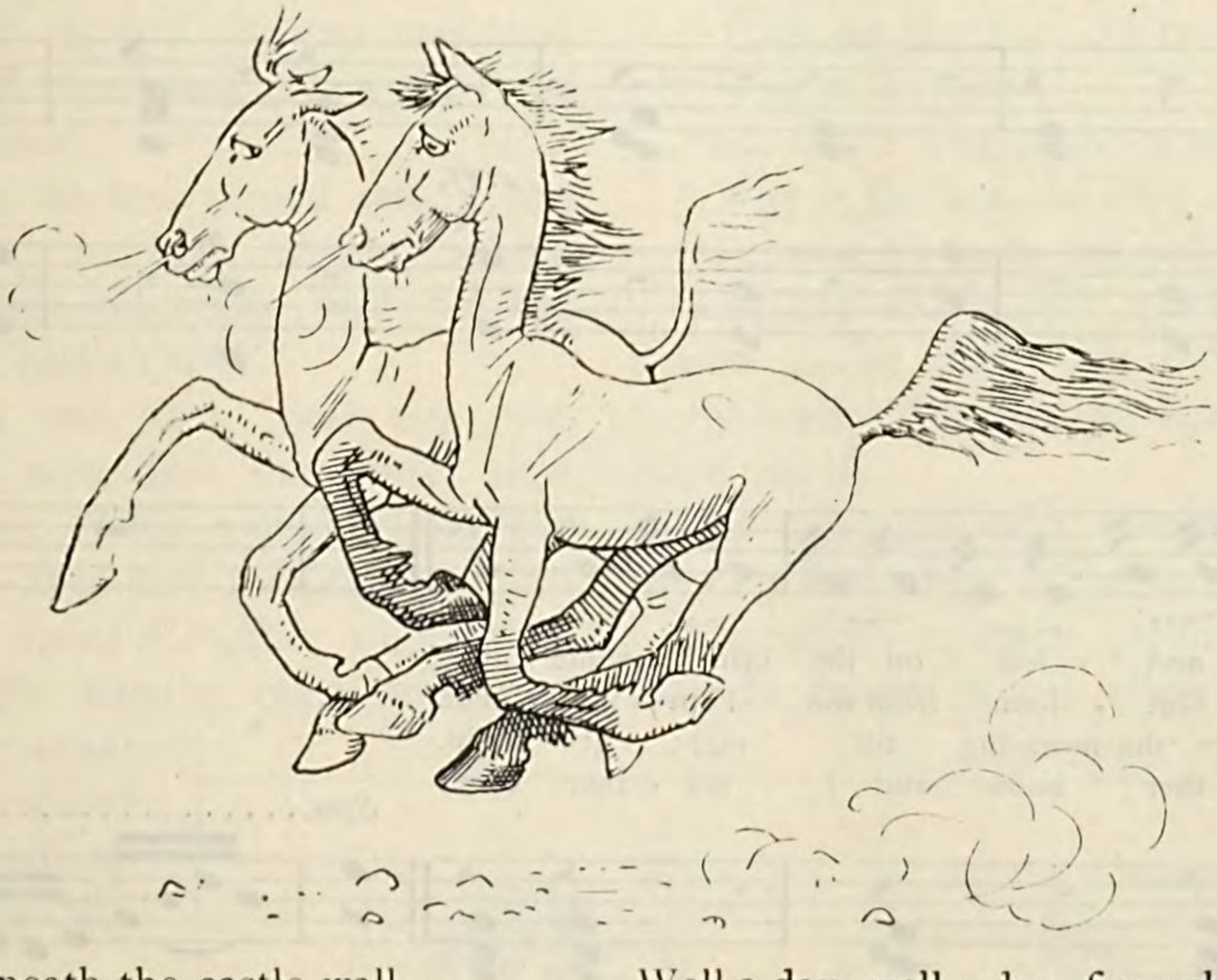
Our letter has almost reached its journey's end; we listen with bated breath as we catch the fall of footsteps late on Christmas Eve coming towards the door. Will he pass? No. Rat-tat! Here it is at last, the stained and travelled long-waited-for letter—the letter for mother from Jack.

EDITH. A. FINDLAY.

THE MAGIC STEEDS.

LACK-A-DAY, lack-a-day, see the gallant knight,
Mark his shining armour and his lance so bright;
Fain he would be riding to do some doughty deed,
But, alas! the noble knight lacks a noble steed.

"Varlet, ho! varlet, ho! bridle, saddle here!
Catch me quickly yonder steeds; catch and bring them near."
Mounted then the lordling light; mounted then the man:
Gallant knight, trusty squire, ride them if you can!



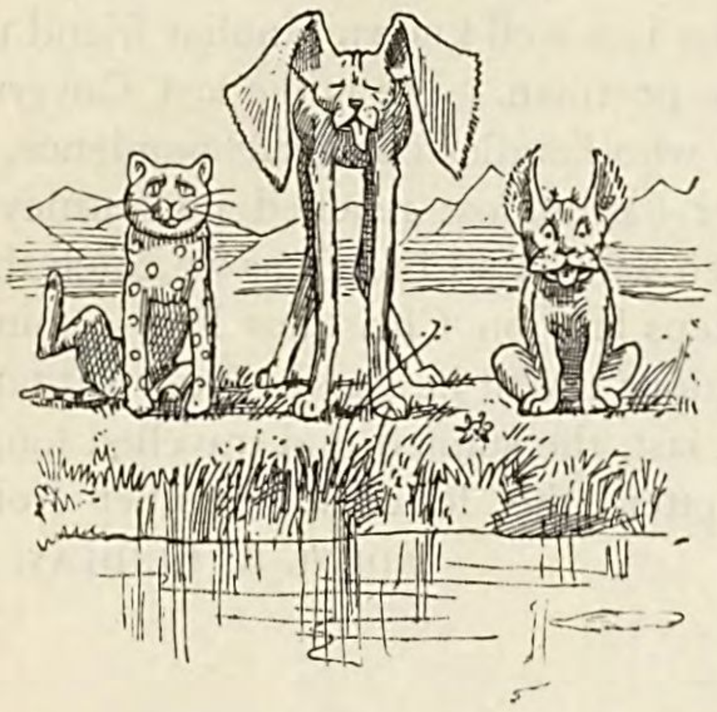
Tra-la-la, tra-la-la, 'neath the castle wall,
Horses twain are prancing, masterless and all.
"By my troth, here they come, squire tried and true!"
"One apiece, master mine, one for me and you!"

Well-a-day, well-a-day, fiery chargers twain;
First they kicked, then they reared, then they kicked again,
Neighed a loud triumphant neigh; ah! the fearsome sound!
Knight and squire lay motionless on the cold, cold ground.

A WONDERFUL TRIO.

Words from LITTLE FOLKS.

Music by CHAS. BASSETT.



Humorously.

1. Nev-er was seen such a won-der-ful three As stood on the shore of the San-dle-wood Sea, While sounds that would make a deaf man stare . . . .
2. 'Twas the Gryv-el-ling Gryg of the fan - like ear, And the spi-der - y legs so flink and grear; 'Twas the Win - ny - ing Wix with his smile so bland, And the
3. They sat on the shore of the Sandlewood Sea, The quank-i - est tri - o that e'er could be; And they yowl'd and yowl'd with a keen de - light, From
4. Why did they do it? Ah, who's to say? Odd - i - ties act in their own quaint way. And if you in - quire if they still are there, Well, I

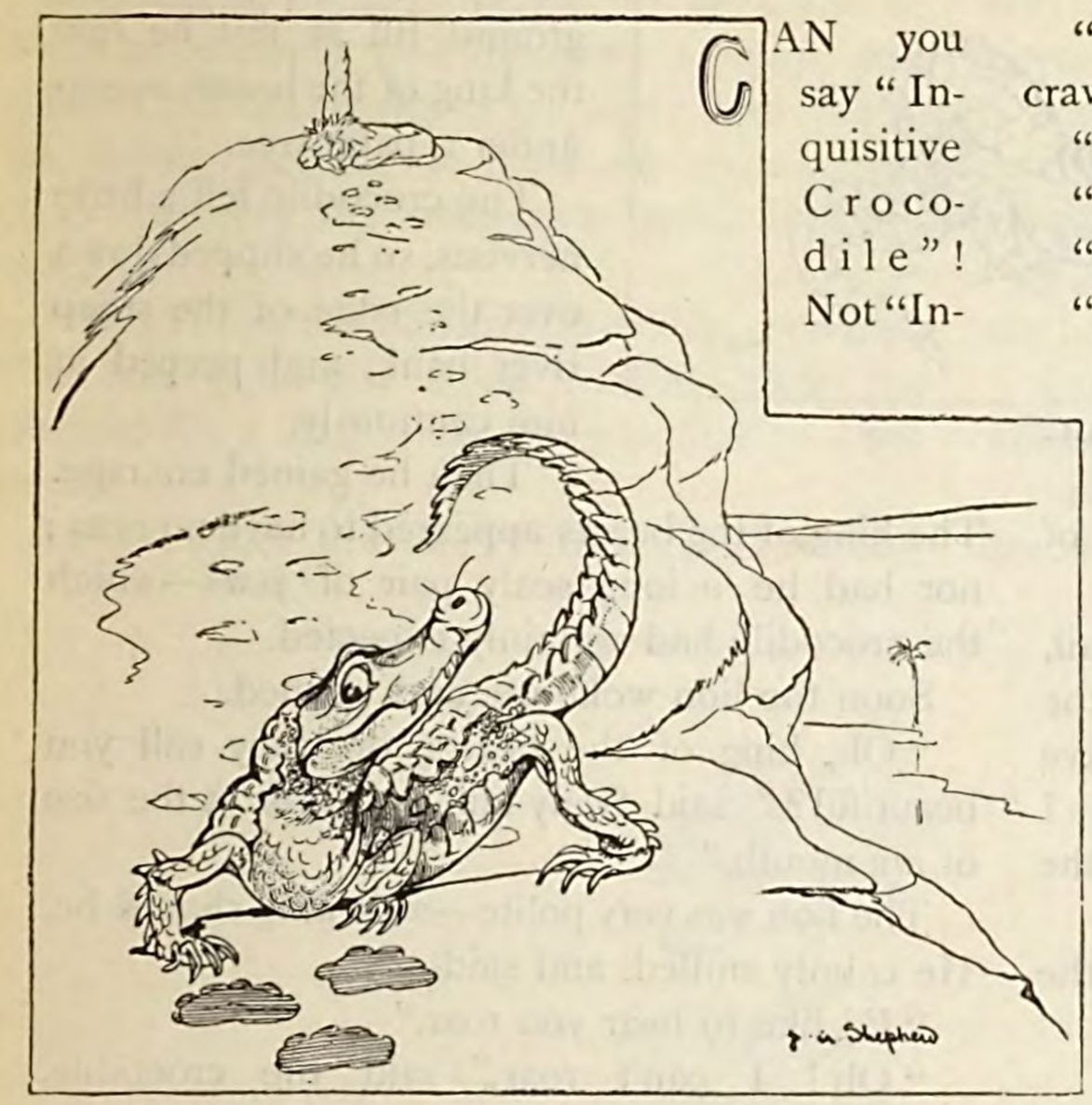
cres.

cres.

Rose and fell on the crin-kle-some air.
Spot-ted Guf - foon from the Tum - tum Land.
eight in the morn-ing till eight at night.
nei - ther know and I nei - ther care!

8va.....

THE INQUISITIVE CROCODILE.



"HE WENT ALONG FRISKING AND TWISTING" (*p.* 128).

CAN you say "Inquisitive Crocodile"! Not "Inquisitive Qwocodile"? Can you say it five times over quickly? If you can, you may read what happened to Scaly-tail, when he was turned out of the river.

The reason why he was turned out of the river was because he was always asking questions; the other crocodiles said he was worse than "The Child's Guide."

From this you see that Scaly-tail was lively; the others were just like those slow things at the Zoo. They would come out on the bank, and take five minutes to think of opening their mouths. And there they would lie with their mouths open and their eyes shut, and after about half an hour they would make up their minds to shut their mouths and open their eyes.

When they wanted to keep quiet, the inquisitive crocodile would put his head out of the water, and ask questions the whole time.

"Why do you keep your mouth open, Creepy-crawly?"

"To catch flies."

"How many have you caught?"

"Don't know."

"Why don't you count them?"

This would enrage Creepy-crawly.

"Go away, Scaly-tail! Don't you know what became of the little crocodile that asked questions?"

"No," Scaly-tail would say calmly. "I should like to know. What became of him? What questions did he ask? Why didn't they answer him? What colour was the little crocodile that asked questions?"

Creepy-crawly pretended to be asleep when Scaly-tail asked too much; and the inquisitive crocodile would go a little farther to where Slimy-toes or somebody else was sunning himself on the mud.

"Tell me, Slimy-toes, what are those marks on the shore?"

"They are the lion's footprints."

"Who is the lion?"

"He is the king of the beasts."

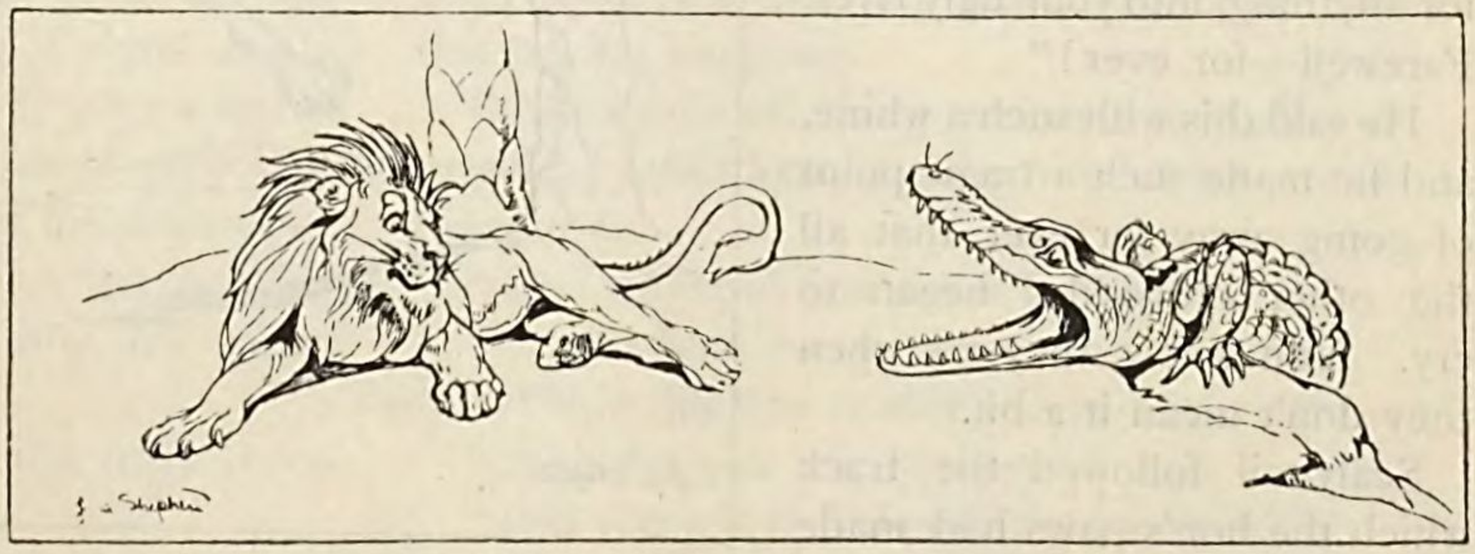
"Why is the lion the king of the beasts?"

"Because he looks the noblest."

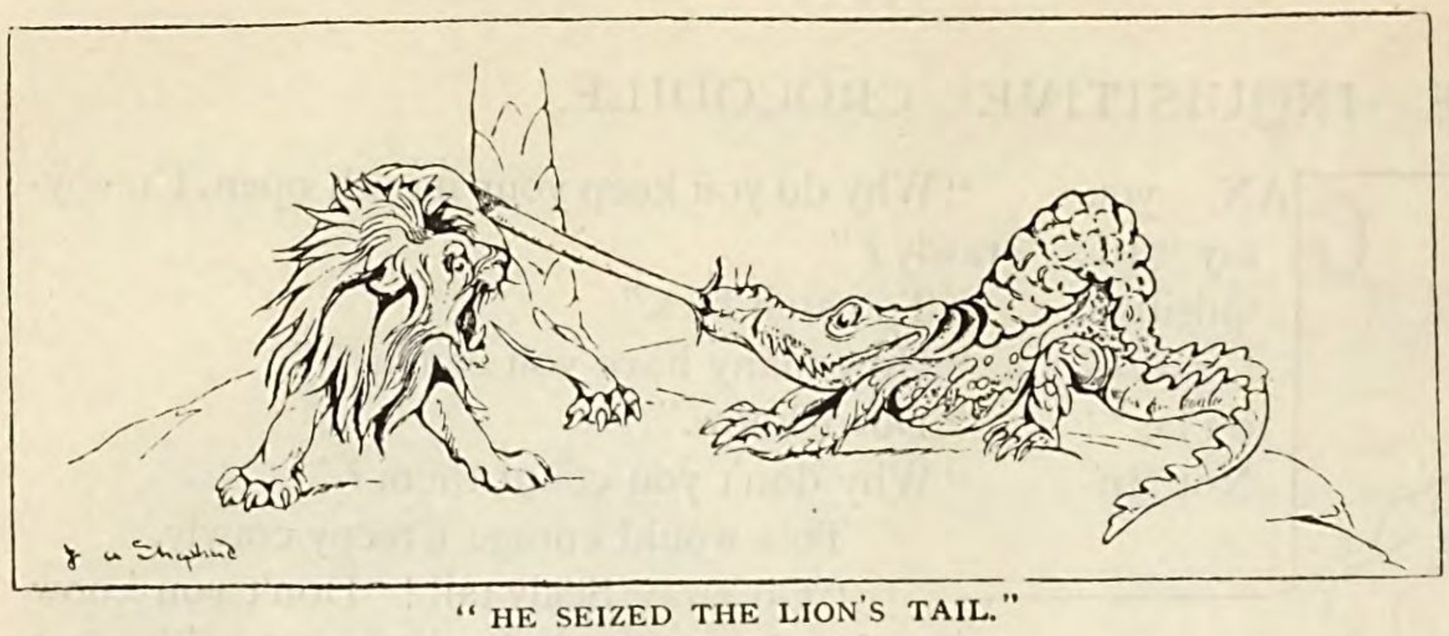
Scaly-tail shook his head. He had his doubts about that. He thought himself perfectly lovely, because he had two eyes and a large mouth.

"Is there any other reason," he said, "why the lion is the king of the beasts?"

The other crocodile groaned. When would there be an end to this fellow's questions?



"'LOOK AT THE SIZE OF *MY* MOUTH!'" (*p.* 128).



"HE SEIZED THE LION'S TAIL."

"Yes," he said, "the lion is the strongest of all the animals."

"How do they know that?" said Scaly-tail, who thought himself the strongest as well as the most beautiful animal in the world. "Have they played a tug of war with the lion? I should like to take the king of the beasts by the tail and play a tug of war."

Slimy-toes would not answer him. So the inquisitive crocodile began again—

"Has the lion a hundred legs?"

"No, he has four, and he makes a long track when he comes down to drink."

"Where does he come from? Where does the lion live? What does the lion do when he is at home?"

"Oh, go away!" cried Slimy-toes. And all the other crocodiles said their patience was worn out too. So they turned the inquisitive crocodile out of the river.

He made a little speech from the bank. He said, "I am very glad to go. I shall be king of the beasts instead of the lion. And I shall never come back again. I would not come back for anything, into your ugly river. Farewell—for ever!"

He said this with such a whine, and he made such a tragic point of going away for ever, that all the other crocodiles began to cry. You know, they cry when they don't mean it a bit.

Scaly-tail followed the track which the lion's paws had made when he went away from the water. He went along frisking and twisting; and the track led him up on high ground, till at last he saw the king of the beasts asleep under a palm tree.

The crocodile felt a little nervous, so he slipped down over the edge of the steep river bank, and peeped at him cautiously.

Then he gained courage. The king of the beasts appeared to have no eyes; nor had he a long scaly pair of jaws—which the crocodile had certainly expected.

Soon the lion woke up, and yawned.

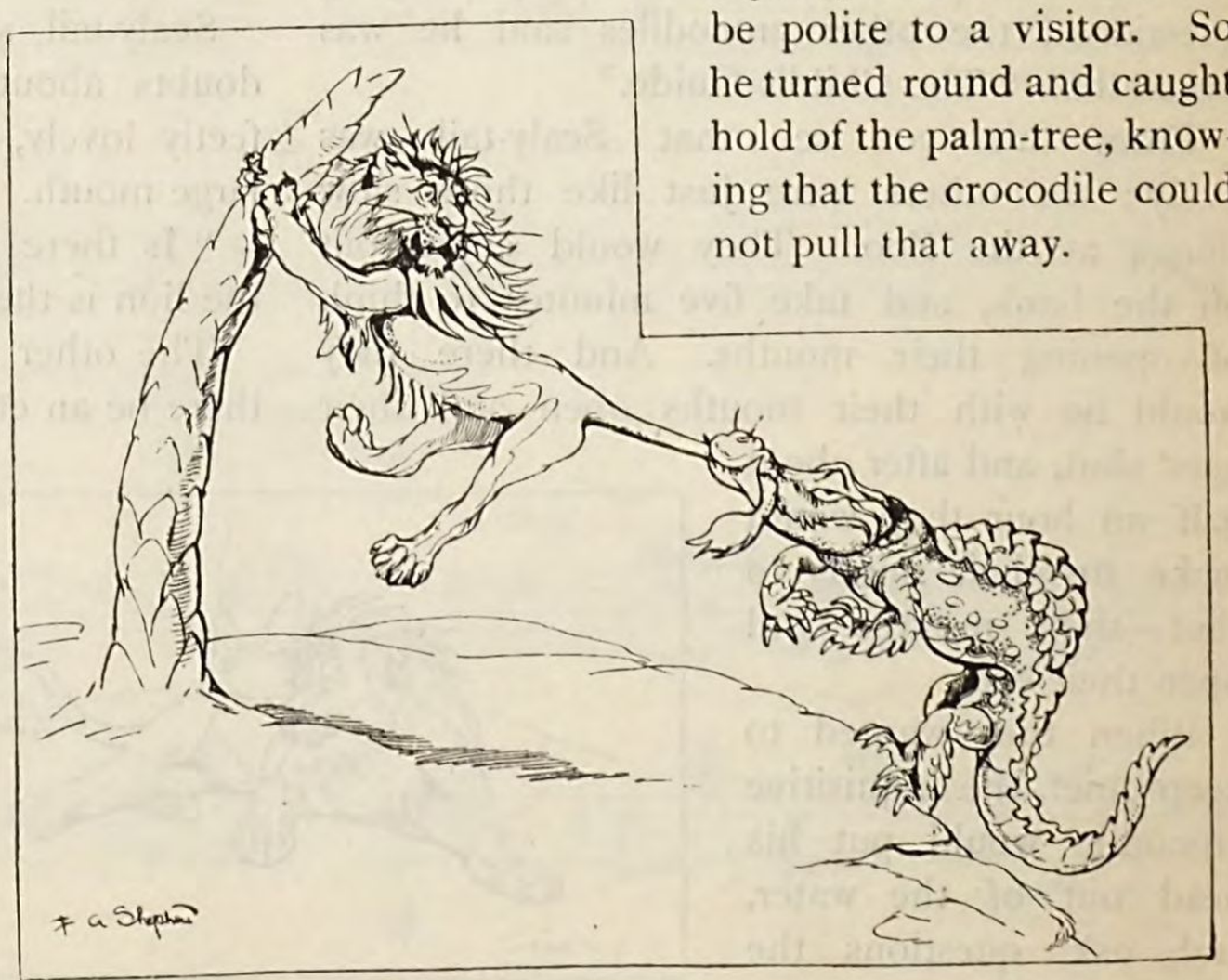
"Oh, king of the beasts, do they call you beautiful?" said Scaly-tail. "Look at the size of *my* mouth."

The lion was very polite—as a king should be. He calmly smiled, and said—

"I'd like to hear you roar."

"Oh! I can't roar," said the crocodile. "But I can make *you* roar." And with that he seized the lion's tail in his jaws.

The roar of the king of the beasts nearly made him let go. But Scaly-tail meant to show the world who was the strongest of the animals, so he tried to pull the lion. And the king of the beasts thought it ignoble to attack such a reptile; besides it would not be polite to a visitor. So he turned round and caught hold of the palm-tree, knowing that the crocodile could not pull that away.



"HE . . . CAUGHT HOLD OF THE PALM-TREE."

"Now," cried the crocodile, "see who is the stronger!"

In boasting, he had opened his jaws, and at the same moment the lion gave a jump, and whisked his tail between his legs; and Scaly-tail, having nothing to hold on to, tumbled backwards over the steep river-bank, and disappeared.

That was how the lion got rid of the crocodile; while the palm-tree stood rocking after the struggle, for it had never been pulled so hard before.

But the poor lion could not regain his footing, and so he rolled to the edge after his tormentor. However, he managed to catch on to the earth, and he pulled himself up, feeling as if he had done a hard day's work.

Then the king of the beasts lay down under the palm-tree, and took a rest after the battle, and fell fast asleep.

Meanwhile, I must tell you what happened down in the river. As soon as Scaly-tail had gone up by the lion's path out of sight, all the crocodiles' tears ceased; and they gave a fly and worm party and had quite a crush of crocodiles on the mud bank to rejoice over his departure.

"I daresay," said Slimy-toes, "he has had his head bitten off by this time for asking questions."

"It will be a warning to all the little crocodiles," said Creepy-crawly.

"How quiet the river will be without him!" said another. "My dear Slimy-toes, you are taking no flies. Do have one! They are very light. Ah, well! poor Scaly-tail, he will never trouble us any more."

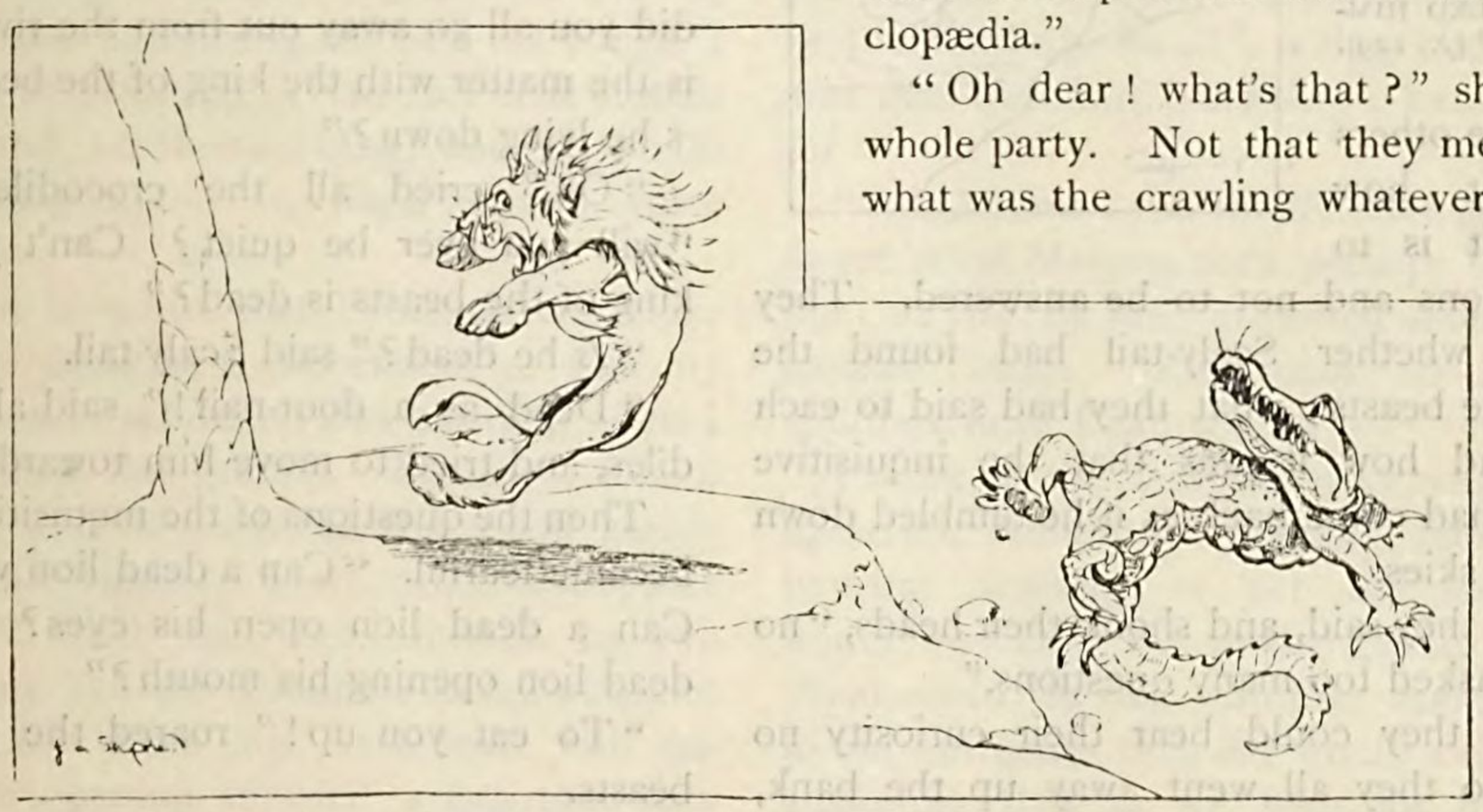
And then all the reptiles at this sort of crocodile tea-party began to sigh softly, and to say—

"Well, well, now he is gone, we can at least say he might have been worse."

And one old crocodile who used very long words, said—

"He may have been actuated by a laudable desire for information, which would in time have developed him into a crawling encyclopædia."

"Oh dear! what's that?" shrieked the whole party. Not that they meant to ask what was the crawling whatever-you-call-it.



"SCALY-TAIL . . . TUMBLED BACKWARDS."

But something was coming down on them—big and long, and wriggling—coming with great force as if falling from a height. It was the inquisitive crocodile suddenly come back; and he fell flat into the middle of the fly and worm party.

How they groaned! How they cried—real tears this time! And not one of them had a good word for the inquisitive crocodile, now that he was *not* gone.

But the funniest thing was that they all took to asking questions, and he would not answer them now.

"Oh! why did you come back?"

"Where have you been?"

"Where did you tumble from?"

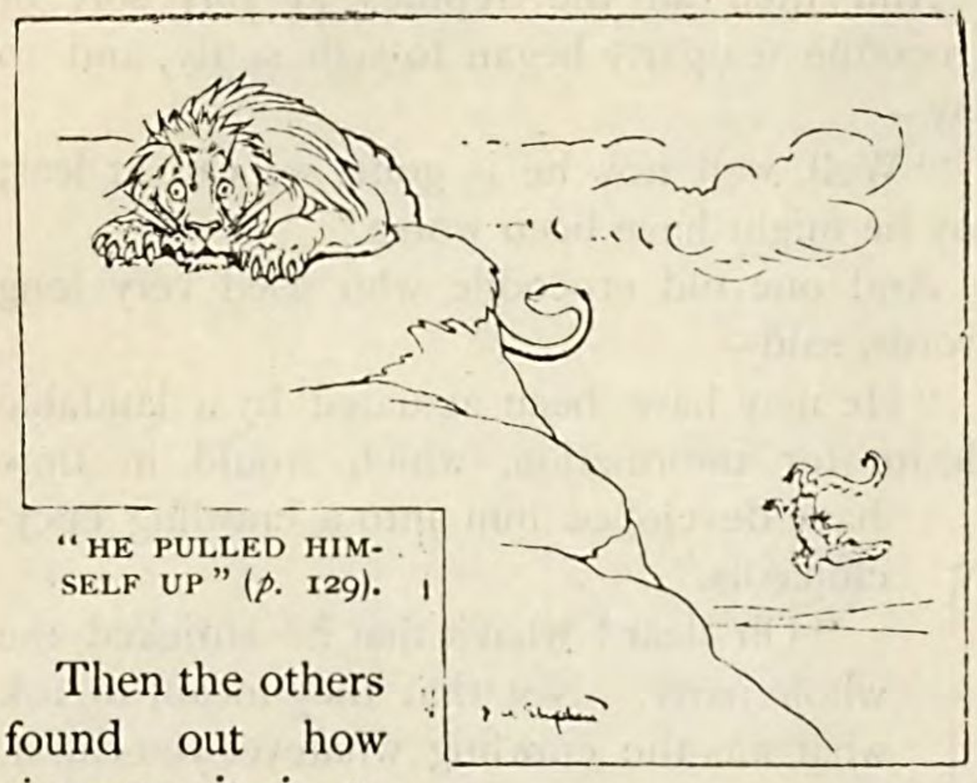
"Who did you see up there?"

"Did you see the king of the beasts?"

"What did he say to you?"

To all this Scaly-tail only answered—

"Let me alone! **I** want to catch flies. Don't you know—haven't you heard—what became of the little crocodile that asked questions?"



"HE PULLED HIMSELF UP" (*p.* 129).

Then the others found out how tiresome it is to ask questions and not to be answered. They wondered whether Scaly-tail had found the king of the beasts; what they had said to each other; and how it was that the inquisitive crocodile had come back as if he tumbled down out of the skies.

"Ah!" they said, and shook their heads, "no doubt he asked too many questions."

At last they could bear their curiosity no longer; so they all went away up the bank, following the track of the lion's footprints and also the footprints of Scaly-tail. And after they had gone up to the top of the bank, and along the top for some distance, they saw the lion lying under a palm-tree, quite flat and still, with his head upon the ground and all his legs stretched out.

"He is dead," they whispered. And then a great deal of crying and twisting began, for they all shed "crocodile tears," and twisted round to wipe their eyes with the tips of their tails.

"How did Scaly-tail kill him?" they asked each other. "Scaly-tail must have been very strong!"

"It was not the strength," said Slimy-toes; "it must have been the questions."

"Oh, no doubt!" said all the others with tears in their eyes.

And they thought they had better bury the poor lion. So they scraped and scratched till they dug a grave, and then they composed an epitaph in his honour:—

"Here the desert lion lies:
Drop a tear and wipe your eyes.
If you ask why he expired,
Vain are guesses and suggestions;
For he died, when he was tired
Of being asked too many questions
By a heartless 'interviewer.'
Would the questions had been fewer!"

"It wasn't the questions; it was his tail," said a voice close behind the crocodile who was making up the verses. And they looked round and there was Scaly-tail.

"What are you doing here?" he said. "Why did you all go away out from the river? What is the matter with the king of the beasts? Why s he lying down?"

"Oh," cried all the crocodiles together, "will you ever be quiet? Can't you see the king of the beasts is dead?"

"*Is* he dead?" said Scaly-tail.

"Dead as a door-nail!" said all the crocodiles, and tried to move him towards his grave.

Then the questions of the inquisitive crocodile became fearful. "Can a dead lion wag his tail? Can a dead lion open his eyes? Why is the dead lion opening his mouth?"

"To eat you up!" roared the king of the beasts.

Then all the crocodiles fled, crawling and wriggling away to the river as fast as they could.

"Why are you crying? Are you not glad not to be eaten up?" asked Scaly-tail as they reached the water.

"We are crying," said Slimy-toes, "because those nice verses are no good now."

"Was it hard to find the rhymes?" asked the inquisitive crocodile; but all the others were gone.

"LYING . . . QUITE FLAT AND STILL."

THE LITTLE OLD LADY NEXT DOOR.

"MINNIE, Minnie, do come and look: there's the queerest, funniest little old lady you ever did see in the next garden! I believe she's just walked out of the Ark: she looks so exactly like Noah's wife that Teddie has upstairs. Do come, or she'll be gone; she hops about so quickly!"

I was having a delightful climb up the old apple-tree, and had nearly reached the bough I was aiming at, rejoicing in the fact that mother was out and nurse was busy, and so would know nothing about it, when Nina's voice reached me.

Little did it matter that I tore an enormous rent in my dress as I descended, or that my poor hands were scratched and bleeding when I at last reached the ground. I rushed, full of eagerness, to Nina's side, as she stood gazing through "our window," as we called a loophole in the wall which had been formed by two bricks having had the goodness to fall out, and leave a vacant space just on a level with our eyes, which opening afforded a beautiful view into the enchanted regions beyond.

Of course the bricks had had no help at all from human fingers — oh no! not in the slightest.

Most likely the fairies who haunted the garden just in the dusk of evening could tell something about it.

"Oh, Nina," I cried, "she *is* funny! Yes, she is just like Mrs. Noah; but oh, look, look! there's a little black boy! I suppose he belongs to her. How quickly he pops about everywhere. Well, they *are* nice people! What fun it is to look at them! I *am* glad we did not go with mother to see Aunt Miriam: she can't be half so nice as this dear little old lady. We really must get to know her, Nina. How do you think we could manage it?"

"I really don't know," answered Nina thoughtfully. "Do you think it would be any use to be walking on the wall, and just to happen to fall over? It isn't far on the other side, and there's a nice soft piece of grass underneath."

"I am afraid mother would be angry. You see, I've got on my white frock, and I've torn it already. If it were to be stained as well, I don't know what she'd say. She was a bit angry because we didn't want to go and see Aunt Miriam. Why, there she is at the drawing-room window. How quick she has been! Mother, mother!" I cried, rushing in, "do come and see our old lady: she is such a dear! And oh! mother darling, do call and get to know her, and that beautiful black boy: he *is* so delightful!"

"Ah, Minnie! you should have gone with me to see Aunt Miriam, then perhaps I might have done as you ask me," answered mother, with an amused smile. "Run back to the garden, children, until I call you in."

I think for the next few days we almost lived upon the excitement of gazing into the neighbouring domains of our old lady, and in wondering how we might get to know her. What could we do? Mother would not listen to our entreaties that she would call upon her, answering that as we had not done as she wished, and accompanied her on a visit to the unknown aunt, who had but lately returned from Africa, she could not gratify us in this respect.

One day, in skipping round the garden for a little recreation, after the wearisome two hours' lessons I had just gone through, I happened to stop opposite the loophole, hoping to find something worth looking at, but instead of a fair broad sweep of lawn, I encountered, to my astonishment, a pair of roguish eyes and two rows of glistening teeth. It was the "beautiful black boy," as I had described him to mother. Here was an opportunity not to be lost; what a grand thing to tell Nina; and how proud I felt that I should be the first to make his acquaintance!

"How do you do?" I asked—rather timidly, I must confess. A broader grin than before was the only answer. "Rather a rude boy," I thought, "but perhaps he has never learned

manners"; so I asked in my sweetest tone, "Where is the old lady, little boy?"

"Dar!" he answered, pointing with one black finger in the direction of the house, and with a still broader grin upon his comical little face.

"Has she many treasures?" I asked, a vision of unheard-of glories floating before my eyes. "Has she got any monkeys and kangaroos in there?"

"Oceans!" said the boy. "You should just see 'em, missie: helephants, an' rhinosses, an' 'eaps o' things!"

"How lovely!" I cried, clasping my hands in admiration. "How I should *love* to see them!"

Our conversation was here interrupted by the little lady calling her small servant, who ran away quick as lightning to do her bidding.

I walked slowly back to the house, deep in thought. Somehow or other I must make the acquaintance of little Mrs. Noah, as we still called her, and I must do it to-day.

"Minnie," said mother at dinner-time, "I am going to see Aunt Miriam again this afternoon. Would you like to go with me?"

"No, thank you, mother dear," I answered. "Perhaps Nina would like to go. I have not learnt my lessons for to-morrow yet."

"Rather early in the day for that, is it not, dear?" said mother; "but never mind; if you would rather not come with me, I will take Nina. Run and get your things on, dear, and we will have a nice long afternoon with auntie."

I slipped out into the garden. What a splendid opportunity, to be sure! I must make the most of it. What news to tell Nina when she came back: that I had entered the enchanted house, and seen the numberless wonders belonging to our little old lady. There was no time to be lost. How should I manage it?

Perhaps Nina's plan of dropping over the wall was as good as any. Yes, that was what I would do; and after waiting awhile, to be sure that mother had safely departed on her journey, I mounted the wall, and commenced walking slowly along it, thoroughly enjoying my extended view into the enchanted realm.

My intention was to wait until I saw the old lady approaching, when I would suddenly spring down on to the soft grass beneath, in such a way that she would think I had fallen, of course would run to my assistance, and from that moment our friendship should begin.

But, alas! How seldom are our intentions carried out! I had scarcely commenced my journey along the wall when suddenly a strange giddy feeling overcame me. I seemed to be flying through the air at an amazing pace, then all was darkness!

* * * * *

"Poor little girl! I wonder how it happened? Hush! she is coming round. A little more cold water, please; we shall soon be all right."

I lazily opened my eyes, and saw bending over me the bright face of my little old lady, and a little farther off mother and Nina. What could they be doing here? I wondered, in a dazed sort of way. But I presently forgot everything in a feeling of terrible pain in my back when I attempted to move.

"Lie still, darling," mother said in her loving voice. "The doctor is coming soon, and auntie will let you stay here until you are better, although you were so naughty as to tumble over into her garden."

"Auntie!"

In a moment it flashed upon me—this was Aunt Miriam!

"Yes, Minnie," said the dear little lady, answering my look of inquiry with a smile. "You would not come to see me; you thought I could not be half so interesting as a certain little old lady who lives next door to you. Ah! I know all about it, you see. Well, I hope we shall be good friends after all, my dear."

And good friends we were indeed. Ah! who could tell one half the goodness of dear Aunt Miriam all through the weeks of suffering that followed! how patient she was, how gentle! how she cheered the weary days with amusing stories of her life in Africa, till I almost forgot the pain in my interest, as she painted vivid pictures full of glowing life.

She never showed me the "helephants" and "rhinosses" I had heard about, but many a pretty present and valuable knick-knack found its way somehow into my keeping, and so numerous and unexpected were the surprises she prepared for me, that I used to call her my "fairy godmother."

The President and the Hero.

During a tour which he was making once in the south of France, President Carnot stopped for a short time at the railway station at Arles to receive an address from the mayor of the town. Before the proceedings were ended a pleasant incident occurred. A handsome young woman, who wore many medals given to her for saving persons from being drowned, brought forward her boy of five years old and introduced him to the President. The little fellow bade fair to rival his mother, for only a few months before he had plunged into the canal after a playmate who had fallen into the water, and succeeded in bringing him safely to the bank. The woman while handing M. Carnot a bouquet lifted up her boy that the President might kiss him. The President spoke a few kind words to her, saying that heroic mothers were sure to bring up heroic sons.

Tigers on the Increase.

Of late years steps have been taken to prevent the destruction of forests by fire in certain districts of India. This care has had one curious result. Cover and water, which vanished with the timber, have again become common, and there has consequently been a large increase in the number of tigers. For the same reason there has also been an enormous increase in the number of wild deer. In one sense it is fortunate that the deer have grown in numbers with the tigers, for the latter have preyed upon them instead of upon cattle and human beings. When, however, they shall have scared away the deer, or have become tired of venison, they will probably prowl around villages and play havoc with cattle, besides killing their man or two.

A Japanese Dinner.

A grand dinner-party in Japan is a very formidable thing indeed. According to Sir Edwin Arnold, the guests are surrounded by twenty or thirty dishes, of which you may partake as often as you please, and just when you please. You may leave off and chat, he says, and begin at the beginning again, if you like. Even after everyone has had enough, the substantial part of the meal only commences—for the Japanese. The wine is removed and a big white tub is brought in filled with hot boiled rice. Along with it fresh tea arrives once more, and then each native guest will eat two bowls of rice, and then another soaked with tea. It is hard to see where the enjoyment comes in.

Jack Sparrow's Warning.

As a gentleman sat writing in his library one cold winter's afternoon, he was roused by a loud chirruping that seemed to him like a call of warning. Going to the window to ascertain what it meant, he saw one or two birds pecking at food that had been put out for them on the snow, and on the top of the grey oak palings that divided the gardens of the next house and his own, there lay a tabby cat gazing with greedy eyes at the birds, and slowly dragging

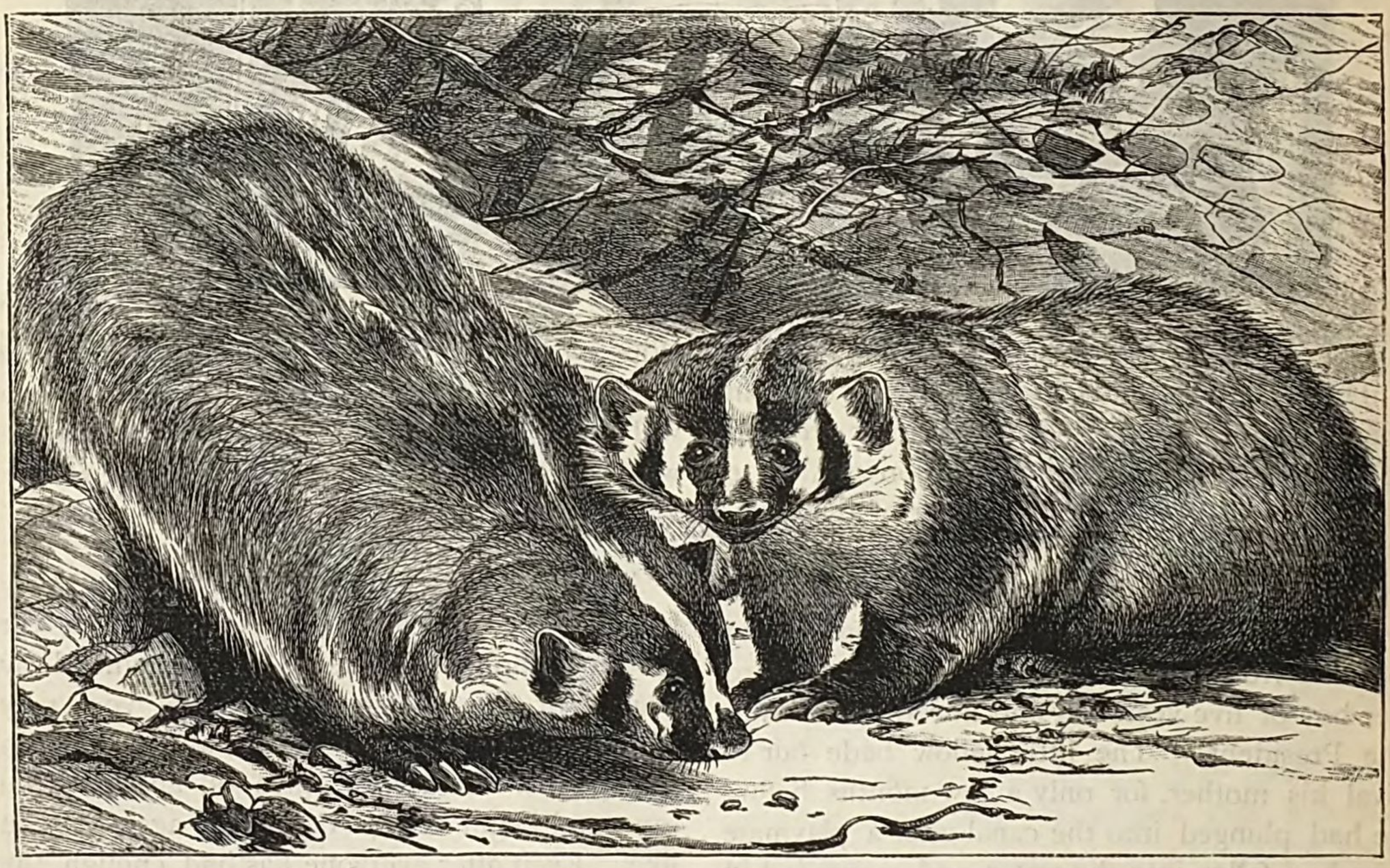
itself along in their direction. Sitting on the window-sill of the room above there sat a sparrow which kept up a loud twittering, so emphatic as to appear deliberately uttered, and presently the birds on the ground below flew off. Then the cat sprang to the earth and stealthily crawled to an evergreen bush, which it carefully examined. Then it jumped up on to the fence on the other side of the garden, only to find that its intended victims had disappeared. As soon as all the birds were beyond the reach of danger, the call notes ceased. But it was perfectly evident that Jack Sparrow seated aloft had spied pussy, and had uttered its warning cries to its feathered fellows, who were wise enough to give heed to them while yet there was time.

Instead of Fish-hooks—Limpets.

In some parts of the world the remora, or sucking-fish, is used in fishing instead of hook or line, but the natives of the dreary country known as Tierra del Fuego employ a more strange device still. The people possess no fish-hooks, yet since they largely feed on fishes, the question is how do they catch them? It is said that they use the limpet instead. To whatever object this sea-snail fastens itself, it holds on with enormous force. The natives, therefore, tie a limpet to a line and by this means succeed in capturing big and even heavy fishes.

A Champion Digger.

The picture on this page represents a couple of American badgers as they may be seen any



A BRACE OF BADGERS.

day in the Berlin Zoological Gardens. This animal may be looked upon as a champion at digging, in which operation he uses all his feet —the fore pair for delving, the hind pair for throwing out the loosened earth. Like the whole of his tribe, the badger is so shy that he is very seldom seen by the human eye. And yet he is not wise enough to avoid traps as carefully as he shuns man, for they are caught by the hundred—and thousand even—for the sake of their skins. Though dull during the day, he is quite active and playful by night.

A Fight and What Came of it.

Boys will be boys, and so they sometimes take to fighting, even though they know it to be wrong. When Thackeray was at school he fought at least one pitched battle, and bore the mark

of his encounter to his dying day. His opponent was the late Mr. G. S. Venables, Q.C., who came off conqueror, not, however, before he had broken young Thackeray's nose. Thackeray took his unfortunate defeat with great good humour, after the pain and humiliation of it had passed away; and it is even said that he adopted, in later life, his pen name of "Michael Angelo Titmarsh" because the famous painter and sculptor's face was disfigured in the same way as his.

The Story of the Fairy Loch.

Some seven hundred feet above the shores of Loch Lomond, not far from the pretty village of Luss, there is a tiny wee lake almost entirely hidden from view by a tangled growth of ferns and trees. On the surface of part of the water a brilliant blue-green patch shows itself, and is the subject of a strange story. When Mr. Walter Severn went to paint it, he was accompanied by a Highlander to lead the way. The native told him that long, long ago, the fairies fell a-quarrelling about the dyeing of their clothes, and in the midst of the dispute one fairy, angrier than the rest, threw the green-blue dye into the pool, where it has lain ever since —of course, to prove the truth of the story!

Strange Fondness for Lions.

According to Emin Pasha, there is a tribe to the east of the Nile that is so fond of lions, that any one of them would rather suffer death himself than kill the king of beasts. It happened that a lion once fell into a pit that had been dug for big game to fall into. Some Soudanese proposed to slay the lion, but the native chief forbade them, and begged that the animal might be entrusted to his care. This was agreed to, and thereupon the chief procured a strong pole and stuck it in the pit, giving it a sloping direction to the pit's mouth. The lion lost no time in walking up the pole, and bounded off to the jungle as soon as it reached the upper earth. It made no attempt to attack any person, being probably much too frightened to think of anything but its own safety.

Queen Mary's Lap-dog.

Mary Queen of Scots had a favourite lap-dog, which is said to have been present at the execution of its poor mistress in Fotheringay Castle. After the royal lady had been beheaded, the faithful creature refused to leave her dead body, and had to be carried out of the hall by force. At that period lap-dogs were the pets of men as well as of women. Dr. Boleyn, a relation of unhappy queen Anne Boleyn, owned one, "which," as it is written, "he doted on." Anne once asked him to grant her one wish, and in return he should have whatever he might desire. Knowing his affection for the dog, she begged it of him, and of course the doctor had nothing to do but to give it to her. "And now, madam," he said, "you promised to grant me my request." "I will," quoth the queen. "Then, I pray you, give me my dog again."

How Soon can the Cobra Kill?

The natives of Mysore, in India, profess to be able to tell how soon a person bitten by a cobra will die. Under the neck of this snake there are patches of black stripes—five stripes to each full patch. According to native calculation, one hour for every patch is needed for the poison to act. Consequently when a person has been bitten, the first thing to be done—provided the snake be willing, of course—is to examine the number of patches on the reptile's neck. Thus, should there be two perfect patches and a portion of a third on the neck, they say that it is a "two-and-a-half-hour cobra," meaning that death will follow in two hours and a half from the time of the bite. This seems to be the merest moonshine.

Paying a Compliment.

Velasquez, the greatest of Spanish painters, was on the friendliest terms with the king, Philip IV., who gave him a room in the royal palace in Madrid as a studio and visited him there at all hours. Towards the end of his career Velasquez painted a large picture entitled "The Maids of Honour," considered by some authorities to be his finest work. The painter introduced a portrait of himself at his easel into the picture, in which the king showed particular interest, inspecting it daily. During one of his visits, Velasquez laid aside his palette and brushes with the remark that the picture was finished. "Not so," replied Philip, "one detail is wanting," and taking a brush the monarch began working at the portrait of the painter.

When he had done Velasquez saw that the king had sketched at his breast the cross of the order of knighthood of Santiago, one of the highest honours he could bestow. This was a graceful as well as a unique way of rewarding genius.

The Kestrel that liked Company.

It is not easy to tame so wild a bird as a kestrel, a fierce member of the falcon family, but Mrs. Cole, a lady living near Shrewsbury, owns one that became quite domesticated. The bird was taken from its nest and placed in a cage out of doors until it got its feather dress finished. Then it was allowed freedom, and at once flew across a park into some woods. A few days afterwards it came back to Mrs. Cole's house, and has remained with her ever since. When spoken to it used to sing some soft song notes. Sometimes it might be seen flying about a mile or more from the house, but it soon returned to look for an open window by which it might reach its favourite quarters—the dining-room—where it usually perched on a picture-frame. Whenever Mr. Cole called it the kestrel always came to his arm, no matter how many persons were dining, and was in no way afraid of the glare of the lamps and candles.

Whistling on Seals.

The well-known love of seals for musical sounds too often leads to their destruction. When the Eskimo hunter sees none of his prey about, he begins whistling, and sooner or later is sure to attract an appreciative seal within reach of his harpoon. Lying at full length at the edge of the ice, he continues whistling low, plaintive, calling notes, and presently a few of the animals will draw near to the spot, lifting themselves as high as they can out of the water and slowly shaking their heads to and fro, as if keeping time to the music. By-and-by one seal more daring than its fellows will come very close to the hunter, who then jumps to his feet and slays the creature, while its mates make off as quickly as possible. The whistling is generally more successful when performed by another Eskimo at a short distance behind the hunter lying motionless on the ice.

The Elephant's Memory.

The elephant has an excellent memory. It recollects friends well and it rarely forgets an injury. It is recorded of one that it smashed a cocoanut upon its driver's head, and smashed the man's head at the same time, because the lazy thoughtless fellow had broken a cocoanut on its skull the day before. A quartermaster engaged in superintending the removal of baggage in the camp by means of an elephant, became angry at the creature's refusing to carry more than a certain weight, and foolishly flung a tent-peg at its head. Some days afterwards the elephant overtook the quartermaster as he was going through the camp, seized him with its trunk and neatly placed him among the branches of a tamarind tree, leaving him to reach the ground again in the best way he could.

THE DANCING LESSON.

LISTEN, dolly—do you hear?
Brother plays his violin;
You must learn to dance, my dear—
Where's your hand? Come, now begin!

Oh, if he would only play
Something fit for tiny feet!—
Just a waltz or polka, say,
For your steps so light and neat!

But the music that he knows
Seems for us almost too fine:
Never mind; turn out your toes—
Dance away, your hand in mine.

See how fast you're going now—
You have nearly lost your hat;
Ah, the "shake"! I wonder how
Anyone could dance to that!

Here comes in a pretty piece:
Play it louder, brother, do;
And look round a moment, please—
See how she keeps time with you.

There's a pause—a long, long run—
Then the last notes, deep and slow:
Now the dancing lesson's done;
Make your curtsey, miss, and go!

DOLLY'S FIRST STEPS. (*See p.* 136.)

PAGES FOR VERY LITTLE FOLK.

WHAT THEY THOUGHT.

JACKO.

"HURRY on, Rover, just move a bit faster;
Gee up, old doggie, show what you can do!
See, I can ride quite as well as our master!
Now we are off! We'd be beaten by few!
That's what I think—what say you?"

ROVER.

"Jacko, no doubt you imagine you're clever,
But I can tell you you're awfully wrong.
Master just said, 'He'd in all his life never
Seen such a clumsy ape bobbing along.
I think he's right—what say you?"

IDA MARY'S APRON.

I-DA MA-RY had an a-pron with two pock-ets and a bib. It was made of brown hol-land and cov-er-ed her frock nice-ly.

"I feel like a cook," she said to her-self. "If I could on-ly cook, this would be just the a-pron to wear. But I don't know how to make any-thing."

"What are you think-ing a-bout, I-da Ma-ry?" said her moth-er.

"I am wish-ing that I knew how to cook," said I-da Ma-ry.

Her moth-er laugh-ed.

"You are not old e-nough to do much yet; you have your les-sons to learn, and that takes up your time."

"I have my play-time," said I-da Ma-ry, "and I might as well do some cook-ing as be play-ing with my dolls all the time."

"Do you know how to make bread-and-milk, I-da Ma-ry?" said her moth-er.

"Oh, I can put some bread in-to a cup, and mix it with some milk, but it is not like the bread-and-milk that cook makes for John-ny's break-fast."

"Well," said her moth-er, "I will tell the cook to show you, and you shall make some bread-and-milk for John-ny if you like."

I-da Ma-ry was much pleas-ed, and she ran off to the kit-chen to tell the cook what her moth-er had said.

Cook was a ver-y good-na-tur-ed wo-man, and she said, "You have just come in time, Miss I-da Ma-ry, for nurse says Mas-ter John-ny must have his bread-and-milk as soon as he wakes from his aft-er-noon sleep. I

will give you a cloth to pin round you, so that your frock will not get splash-ed."

"Oh, but I do not want one. Do you not see that I have an a-pron with two pock-ets and a bib? It is just the thing to do the cook-ing in."

"Well, it is a grand a-pron," said cook; "it does keep your frock co-ver-ed."

And then cook got out a sauce-pan, and a jug of milk, and chi-na ba-sin; and next she cut two large sli-ces of bread.

"Now," said she to I-da Ma-ry, "you must cut the bread in-to nice small square pie-ces, and aft-er that put them in-to the ba-sin."

"I-DA MA-RY TOOK UP A SPOON."

So I-da Ma-ry cut up the bread as cook had told her.

"Now the bread is in the ba-sin, cook, what is to be done next?"

"Pour the milk into the sauce-pan, and put the sauce-pan on the stove, and watch it till it be-gins to boil," said cook, "but do not let it boil o-ver."

I-da Ma-ry did as she was told, and in a few min-utes she said—

"It boils, it boils!"

"Now pour the milk o-ver the bread," said cook.

And I-da Ma-ry pour-ed the milk in-to the ba-sin.

"How nice it looks!" she said; "just as it does when you make it. Thank you for show-ing me how to do it."

And I-da Ma-ry took up a spoon and be-gan to stir up the bread.

"No, you must not do that, Miss I-da Ma-ry. Let it stand qui-et-ly till it is cool e-nough for Mas-ter John-ny."

Just then nurse came down.

"See, nurse, I have made John-ny's bread-and-milk. Does not it look nice? I am go-ing to learn cook-ing, and this is my first les-son. What shall I learn next, cook?"

Cook said she would try to think of some-thing eas-y for I-da Ma-ry to learn.

And I-da Ma-ry went off to her moth-er to tell her how much bet-ter she liked cook-ing than play-ing with dolls, and how she had made John-ny's bread-and-milk.

"But I am not sure I should have thought of it if I had not had this hol-land a-pron with two pock-ets and a bib."

J. G.

MAUD'S NEW SKIPPING-ROPE.

"BOOKS, books, books! I think you will turn in-to a book your-self some day, Phil."

"Wait till I have fin-ish-ed this chap-ter, Maud, and then I will go out with you."

"That is al-ways what you say," said Maud: "just a chap-ter, just a page, and the time goes."

Phil-ip turn-ed o-ver an-oth-er page.

"On-ly two more, Maud. Do go. I shall read fast-er if you do not talk to me. And then I will come,

> And you shall see with your eyes of blue
> What a nice sur-prise I have got for you."

Maud went a-way slow-ly, and when she had reach-ed the door she turn-ed to say—

"Be quick, Phil-ip."

And then she went and put on her gar-den hat and went in-to the gar-den, down the walk be-tween the cur-rant bush-es to a piece of waste ground grown o-ver with short grass, that she call-ed her play-ground, for here she could run a-bout, and jump, and skip, and hop, and try to walk up-on stilts, and do all sorts of things; and the gar-den-er did not find fault, as he did if she skip-ped in the gar-den walks, and knock-ed off a flow-er here and there.

"I won-der what the sur-prise is?" said Maud, as she sat down on a bench to wait for Phil-ip.

Be-fore long she saw him com-ing a-long, hold-ing his arms be-hind him. It was plain he had got some-thing he did not want her to see.

As he came near-er to her he call-ed out—

"Three guess-es, Maud. What have I got in my hand?"

"Oh, I don't know. Is it a par-cel?"

"Yes, it is a brown pa-per par-cel; but what is in it? That is one guess. Now guess a-gain."

"Is it a wax doll with curl-y hair?"

"No, not quite so large as that."

"Not so large? then is it a small thing? I have lost my thim-ble, and I've brok-en my chi-na cup, so per-haps you have brought me one. Stop, stop; I have not had my third guess yet. Let me see: I gave my skip-ping-rope to Sal-ly Brown. Oh, Phil, is it a skip-ping-rope?"

"'ONLY TWO MORE, MAUD.'"

Phil-ip laugh-ed.

"Yes," said he, "it is a skip-ping-rope with fine paint-ed handles. It is the pret-ti-est I could find in the shop."

And Phil-ip o-pen-ed the par-cel.

"Oh, what a beau-ty!" said Maud; "it is far pret-ti-er than mine was. And what nice rope! Oh, Phil, how good of you!"

"Well, now let me see if you can skip with it," said Phil-ip, giv-ing it in-to her hands.

And Maud be-gan to skip.

"MAUD BE-GAN TO SKIP."

"It is splen-did," said she; "it al-most skips of it-self. I never skip-ped with such a skip-ping-rope be-fore. It is the thing I want-ed most, Phil-ip. How came you to think of it?"

"Why," said Phil-ip, "that was not ver-y hard. You gave your rope to lit-tle Sal-ly be-cause she was a poor lit-tle girl, and her moth-er could not buy one for her. So I thought it was the best pre-sent I could give you, and the best sur-prise, and I took a walk in-to Lin-ton to the toy-shop there, and though I saw all sorts of toys, I on-ly ask-ed for skip-ping-ropes, and I bought the pret-ti-est that the shop-keep-er had to sell. I am glad you like it."

"Yes, I like it ver-y much. I could skip all day with it."

"Well, don't do that, for I want to have a hop-ping race with you, and then we will try the new jump. Where is it?"

"It is just at the end of the play-ground o-ver hur-dles. They are not ver-y high, and I think I can jump o-ver them. I know you can, and now that you are here I will try."

And Maud put her skip-ping-rope in-to the brown pa-per, and laid it on the bench.

"We will hop down to the hur-dles, and then we will have a grand jump-ing match," said Phil-ip. J. G.

SUMMER PLEASURES.

NOW the days are bright and fair,
And the skies are blue;
Flowers blossom everywhere,
Birds are singing too.

Happy, happy summer-time,
Everything is gay;
Don't you wish it stayed with us,
Never went away?

OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES.

METAGRAM.

I AM to jump.
Change my first letter and I am a dog.
Again, and I am a heap of earth.
Again, and I am a sum of money.
Again, and I am like a circle.
Again, and I am a noise.
Again, and I am to hurt.

The Camels,
Wimbledon Park, S. W.
VIOLET FRERE.
(Aged $12\frac{3}{4}$.)

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

MY first is in sit, but not in lie.
My second is in tart, but not in pie.
My third is in fire, but not in coal.
My fourth is in jar, but not in bowl.
My fifth is in wonder, but not in think.
My sixth is in blue, but not in pink.
My seventh is in leaf, as well as flower.
My eighth is in church, also in tower.
My ninth is in rain, but not in snow.
My tenth is in pastry, but not in dough.
My whole is a favourite fruit.

FRANK H. ORNSBY.
(Aged 11.)
15, *Marsden Street, Westoe,*
South Shields.

CHARADE.

MY first is part of the body.
My second is a musical instrument.
My whole is a town in Southern Europe.

ALICE M. COX.
(Aged $9\frac{1}{4}$.)
Seacroft House, Ravenstone,
Near Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

BURIED NAMES OF RIVERS.

I WENT weeding in my garden.
I caught a fish in a broken net.
Anna runs to meet me when I come home.
The air easily gets thick and heavy.
My sister Con goes to school every day.
I had a Noah's ark last Christmas.
Harriet rent her clothes.

HILDA E. COLEBY.
(Aged $10\frac{3}{4}$.)
The School House, Wargrave,
Henley-on-Thames.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THE initials, read downward, will form the name of a large city, and the finals that of the river on which it stands.

A cape on the south-east of Spain.
A territory belonging to Germany.
A Swiss peak.
A town in Switzerland.
A tributary of the Ganges.

KATIE KIRWAN.
(Aged 16.)
Leithen,
Newnham Road, Bedford.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

IF the following letters are transposed, their initials, read downward, will form a watering-place of England.

1. RXBGHOUR, a place in Scotland.
2. RALALBE EM, an island in the Pacific Ocean.
3. RARMGTE IEU, a flower.
4. NEKSA, a reptile.
5. NTAGRIE, a stone.
6. NPLAOTEE, an animal.
7. MTUEOTIS, a bird.
8. PREHASUTE, a river in Asia.

E. W. ROBERTS.
(Aged $12\frac{1}{2}$.)
5, *Regent Road,*
Lowestoft.

PICTORIAL REBUS.

The above represents a well-known proverb. What is it?

FLOWERS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

PLEASING to the taste, a thorny substance.
An article of food, drinking vessels.
An animal, to fall.
A beverage, a sweet-scented flower.
A girl, belonging to the head, a delicate plant.
A wild animal, a girl's name.

EDWARD S. TRENERY.
(Aged 12.)
26, *Haselwood Road,*
Northampton.

MENTAL HISTORICAL SCENE.

A MAN with a very warlike appearance is standing in a camp, looking, with a face full of perplexity, at two ladies who are on their knees before him in tears. Near them stand two children. Suddenly the elder lady of the two says something despairingly. The soldier relaxes, evidently with great reluctance. Who are the man, the two women, and the children, and for what cause are they pleading?

HILDA MARSH.
(Aged $13\frac{1}{2}$.)
1, *Courtenay Road,*
Waterloo, Liverpool.

OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PAGE.

PRIZE STORY COMPETITION (*Vol. XXXIII., p.* 427).

"A HOLIDAY ADVENTURE."

FIRST PRIZE STORY.

"WHAT a glorious morning!" exclaimed Ursula Lafon, as she opened her sleepy eyes on the 30th of June. And indeed hers were not the only eyes that had been gladdened by the brilliant sun and the birds which were chirping in the ivy with which Hatherley Close School was covered. Two or three days before, Miss Smith had promised that, in honour of her birthday, they should spend a day at Cranley Cove, a wild rocky place by the sea-shore. By ten o'clock on the eventful day, twelve merry schoolgirls, with Miss Smith, were speeding along to their destination. At half-past eleven they arrived and paired off in twos. The only injunction which they had to observe was to be at a certain spot in time for lunch, which injunction no one was likely to forget. After lunch, they loitered about, waiting for Miss Smith, who was to take them to a cave some way distant. All at once Ursula's voice was heard calling to the others. It was the work of a few minutes to reach the spot where she was standing, looking down the steep rocks and pointing to an object a hundred feet below. This object proved to be a baby, lying fast asleep on a flat ledge of rock. All saw the danger. Should the child wake it would probably fall over into the abyss beneath. There was no time to reach the ledge by the path, for that would have taken more than a quarter of an hour, and already the baby seemed stirring. With one look at Miss Smith, Ursula sprang from ledge to ledge with a surprising agility. Would she ever reach the child in time, or without injury to herself? was the question in the mind of all. Just then the child woke and uttered a little cry; the next moment Ursula reached the spot with a jump from the rock above. She clasped the child, but she herself lay white and still. Miss Smith, with two of the girls, descended by the less perilous footpath. When they reached the spot, Ursula was unconscious, and the baby was stroking her white face with its small fingers. In the course of a few minutes she was restored to consciousness, and she and the child were carried to the station waiting-room. The brave girl uttered no cry the whole way, but her face showed how much she suffered. That night, Miss Smith told the girls that, through her own bravery, Ursula would be a cripple for life, and added, in a trembling voice, "Ursula has proved herself to-day, and ever will be, 'the heroine of the school.'"

AMY F. SHEPPARD.
Towcester. (Aged 15½.)

Certified by M. A. PIDCOCK (Teacher).

THIRD PRIZE STORY.

ONCE, a long time ago, a party of children, with their mother, started off for a day's holiday by the sea-shore. There were four of them: Alfred, who was fifteen, Elsie ten, Charlie nine, and Dorothy seven. When they got there and had had their dinner, they met an old woman, who asked them if they would like to go with her in her boat to see some caves. They said they would very much, so she took them into the caves. The largest one, she said, had been a smugglers' cave, and she and her husband lived in it now. After she had rowed them back, they ran about on the sands, and then little Dorothy, who had been running in and out among the rocks, suddenly found, on turning a corner, that she could see a cave a little way up the cliff, which could be reached by means of some rough steps cut in the rock. She thought she would go up, as there seemed plenty of time before the tide returned, and she would be back before anybody could miss her. So she climbed up the steps and got into the cave. It was very dark, and in trying to go further into it she knocked her head against a piece of rock, and fell stunned to the ground. When she came to herself, she went back to the mouth of the cave and saw that the sea had returned, and had already covered most of the steps by which she came up. She sat down and cried, as she thought she would certainly be drowned, for no one knew where she was, so could not come to help her. She did not know that the old woman's husband had seen her go up the steps. At tea-time the child was missing, and search was made, but she could not be found. All at once Alfred said, "There is a way up the rocks to a cave; do you think she could have gone there?" Just then they heard a voice close to them, and turning round, they saw the old woman who had shown them the caves. She said, "My husband tells me that he saw little Miss Dorothy go up the steps into the cave on the cliff." The tide was now fully up, and they could not get into the cave by the steps, so they borrowed a rope from the old man, and Alfred begged to be allowed to be let down by it from the top of the cliff to the cave below. He arrived just in time to find Dorothy up to her waist in water. They then let down a chair by the rope, and Alfred fastened her in it, and it was drawn up; then the rope was let down again for Alfred, who was safely landed at the top of the cliff. The danger was now over, and they returned home with thankful hearts.

MARY M. MIDDLETON.
1, *Mount Terrace, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.* (Aged 8¾.)

Certified by C. TAYLOR (Teacher).

LIST OF HONOUR.

First Prize (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal of the "Little Folks" Legion of Honour*:—AMY F. SHEPPARD (15½), care of F. J. Sheppard, Esq., Towcester. *Second Prize* (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal*:—HILDA STEEVENS (13½), 59, Talgarth Road, West Kensington, W. *Third Prize* (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal*:—MARY M. MIDDLETON (8¾), 1, Mount Terrace, Chapel Allerton, Leeds. *Honourable Mention, with Members' Medals*:—MAURICE GERBEL (11), Strada Arcu, No. 9, Jassy, Roumania; BEATRICE E. PROCTER (14), Windsor Road, Penarth, near Cardiff, South Wales; FAITH N. STONE (13¼), St. Mary's School, Wantage, Berks; ALICE M. JOHNSON (15), Alexandra College, Shirley, Southampton; LEIGH MATTHEWS (11½), 36, The Chase, Clapham Common, S.W.; DOROTHY PAGE (16), Castlegate, Nottingham; WILLIE SCHWABACHER (9½), Villa Schwabacher, Wannsee, Berlin; LADY HELEN GRAHAM (11¾), Dalrymple Villa, North Berwick; ADELA M. POTTER (14¾), Trinity Vicarage, Upper Tooting, S.W.; G. ARMINELLA HANSELL (9½), Laxton House, Oundle; GLADYS FFOULKE (10), 1, Place d'Jéna, Paris.

PICTURE HISTORY WANTING WORDS.

THREE ILLUSTRATED BOOKS, of the value of HALF A GUINEA each, with OFFICERS' MEDALS of the LITTLE FOLKS Legion of Honour, will be given for the BEST DESCRIPTIONS of the accompanying Picture — which depicts the death of an English king.

These THREE PRIZES will be awarded as follows:—One for the Best Description sent by Readers *of the ages of* 14, 15, *and* 16; one for the Best Description sent by Readers *of* 10, 11, 12, *and* 13; and one for the Best Description sent by Readers *under* 10.

No Description must exceed 500 words in length, and each must be certified as the *unaided work* of the Competitor by a Minister, Teacher, Parent, or other responsible person.

Descriptions from Competitors residing in Great Britain and Ireland must reach the Editor on or before the 10th of August, 1891; those from the Continent, English Colonies, and other places abroad, by the 15th of August.

In addition to the THREE PRIZES and OFFICERS' MEDALS, some of the most deserving Competitors will be included in a SPECIAL LIST OF HONOUR, and will be awarded MEMBERS' MEDALS of the LITTLE FOLKS Legion of Honour.

It is requested that each envelope containing a Description should have "Picture History Wanting Words" plainly written on the left-hand top corner, and be addressed to—

"*The Editor of*
LITTLE FOLKS,
La Belle Sauvage,
Ludgate Hill,
London, E.C."

Competitors are referred to a special notice respecting the Silver Medal which was printed on page 143 of the last Volume of LITTLE FOLKS.

ANSWERS TO OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES (*p.* 69).

WORD PUZZLE.

Nothing after all.

METAGRAM.

Mow. Vow. Row. Low. Tow.
Bow. Now. Cow.

CHARADES.

BUTTERFLY—CUPBOARD.

DOUBLE GEOGRAPHICAL ACROSTIC.

CHESTER—ORLEANS.

1. **C** aucasu **S**. 2. **H** aina **N**. 3. **E** tn **A**. 4. **S** ein **E**. 5. **T** yro **L**. 6. **E** cuado **R**. 7. **R** io de Janeir **O**.

ALPHABET PUZZLE.

MELON.

M **L** **N**
A E A O
P S S I
L A S N
E **O**

BURIED NAMES OF ANIMALS.

1. Doe. 2. Buffalo. 3. Stag. 4. Rat. 5. Pony. 6. Leopard.

HIDDEN PROVERBS.

"Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves."
"Birds of a feather flock together."

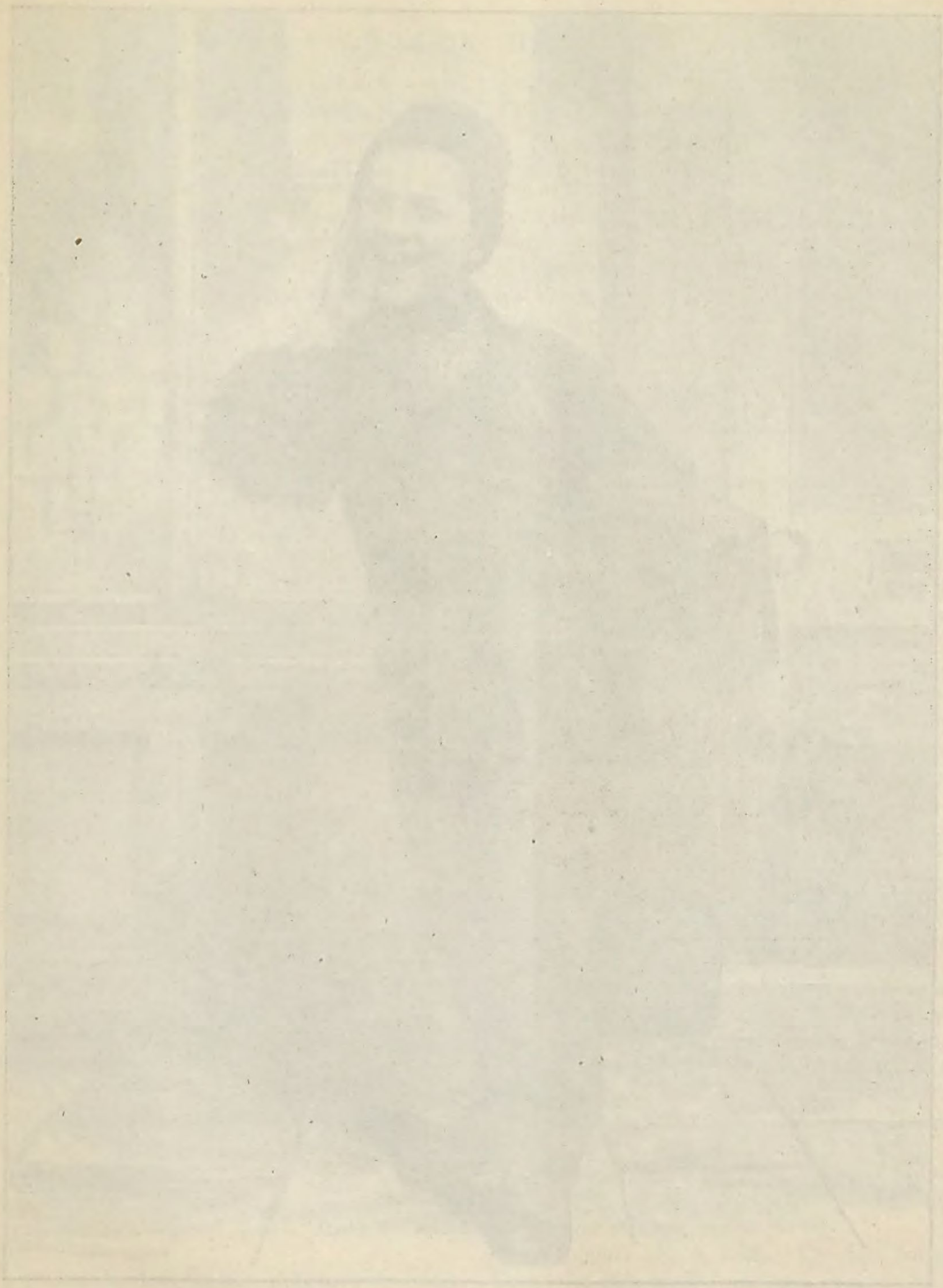
MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

"The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight."

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

POTATO.

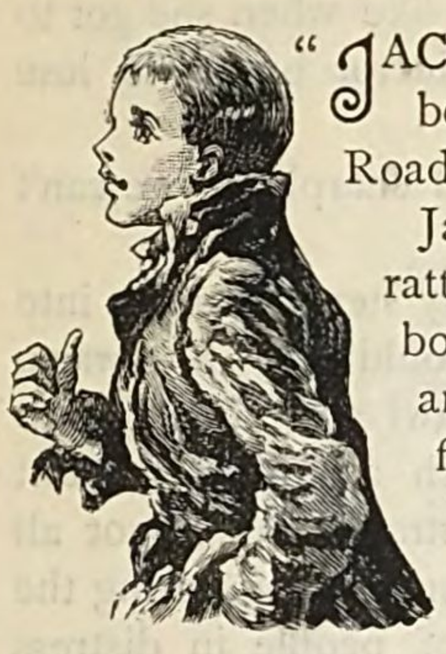
Foun**T**ains. St**O**rk. Sta**T**ion. C**O**w. A**P**e. Pyr**A**mid.



HOMEWARD BOUND.

"'*ADMISSION, SIXPENCE*'' (*p.* 147).

"ADMISSION SIXPENCE."



"JACK SCOTT, here's a wild beast show coming up Grove Road! Let's go and see it."

Jack needed no urging; he rattled his brushes into their box, slung it over his shoulder, and the next instant was flying down the street after his friend Tom Smith.

It did not take long to get to Grove Road. They were in plenty of time to greet the great drab elephant that headed the procession. There were two or three ragged-looking camels, a gorgeous red chariot drawn by six piebald horses, the band was in the chariot; and no common band, judging by the noise they made—the drum itself was enough to deafen all the beasts behind. After the chariot came eight or nine ponderous yellow waggons, closely covered, not even a stray tail sticking out, to hint at the wonders inside. Jack looked at them with eager eyes.

"Why couldn't they put glass sides to those waggons, or a grating, or something?" he said indignantly. "They might as well be stuffed with straw for anything that we can see."

"That's to make people pay money to go inside the show," said Tom, who had been to a show once long ago, and could speak from experience. "There's lions and tigers by the dozen, and wolves and snakes—listen to that!"

Some muffled sound like an angry growl came from one of the waggons. Jack held his breath, growing quite scarlet with excitement; the elephant was nothing in comparison; he was big, but the fact that he was tame enough to walk about the streets in broad daylight took a good deal off his importance: he was not a real wild beast that would snap a man's head off as soon as look at him.

"Is it very dear to go in?" he asked anxiously.

"Sixpence."

"Sixpence," echoed Jack; "that's an awful lot!"

"Can't be done for less, they say; the beasts take no end of feeding—a whole hayrick's nothing to them, and they want meat besides. They're only going to stop three days."

"I'd give anything to see them," said Jack earnestly. "If only plenty of people would want shining up, I'd soon get the money. I'd not mind either dinner or tea: that would save something."

He watched till the last sign of the procession had disappeared through the gates into the big enclosure where the show was to be set up; then he turned away and went back to his beat.

Three days—it would be here till the day after to-morrow. Surely by then, if he did not miss a single customer, he would be able to manage that sixpence. He would try, at any rate.

This was not a very good day for business: the pavements were much too dry, boots did not get nearly as dirty as they ought to have done. In vain Jack flourished his brushes and invited passers-by to try his new bottle of blacking. He went home that night with only one penny to the good after he had paid his expenses. But Jack kept up his courage, and by the evening of the second day the penny had mounted up to fivepence. When the latest customer had gone by he treated himself to a walk down the Grove Road, to see how the show was getting on. It looked very promising: people were streaming in and out, the band was playing briskly somewhere inside, the big drum banging away at the entrance under the flaring gaslights.

On the way home, racing along in his usual fashion, he turned one corner rather too sharply, and came into violent collision with a little pale-faced girl who was carrying a big can full of milk. There was no time to stop himself; the can flew out of her grasp, and a white deluge of milk swept over the pavement.

"Oh, Jack!" cried the child, making a frantic dash after it. "How could you? Mother will be so angry with me."

"I couldn't help it, Kitty. I'm right sorry. Such a lot of it, too."

"A whole fourpence-worth; I shall get beaten

again." Kitty sat down on the first step and began to cry pitifully into her ragged pinafore. Jack looked down at her in deep dismay.

"Never mind, Kitty; we couldn't help it, either of us. I'll go home with you and tell your mother. Don't cry like that."

But Kitty had little hope of getting over the trouble that way. The woman she lived with was not her own mother, and Jack knew very well that Kitty did not get much in the way of kindness from her. She was such a little creature to be slapped and scolded; if she had been a boy he would not have minded so much; as it was, he stood by her in sore perplexity, almost as much distressed as she was.

Kitty sobbed on: the milk dripped away into the gutter, and one of Jack's brightest hopes went with it.

"Kitty," he said, after a minute or two, in quite an altered voice, "I've got some money in my pocket. Pick up your can, and we'll just go and get another fourpence-worth, and then nobody will be any the worse."

Kitty's face cleared like magic.

"Oh, Jack, what a good thing! I *couldn't* have gone home without that milk. I don't mind a bit now."

Jack went to the dairy with her, and counted out four of his precious pennies across the counter. Farewell to the lions, and tigers, and wolves, and snakes, and all the rest of them; better a great deal that he had never seen or heard about them at all, for then he wouldn't have upset that milk. It was very hard; people had no business to buy so much at once.

He watched Kitty safe into her own door, and then he trudged soberly home; he did not feel like racing any more just then.

Dismal days come to most people, and that third day was a very dismal one for Jack; there was no cheery whistling over his work, no flourishing strokes; sun or rain, what difference did it make now? the show was going away that night, and he might never see it again. At the edge of dusk he was standing on the kerbstone, still thinking about it. The crossing in front was one sheet of mud, and a crowded tramcar had pulled up right in the middle of it to let a lady with a little girl and a number of parcels get out.

Jack watched the process rather curiously: he wondered how she was going to manage, and what her boots would be like when she got to the pavement. The conductor began to lose patience at the delay.

"Come, ma'am," he said sharply; "we can't wait here all day."

Very unwillingly the lady stepped down into the shallowest puddle she could see. She was a Quakeress, in a drab shawl and a big drab bonnet, and there was such a kindly pleasant face inside it that Jack straightway forgot all the resolutions he had been making during the afternoon to keep clear of people in distress another time.

He dashed across, splashing right through the mud, and caught up the little girl and the biggest parcel in his arms.

"I'll lift her over for you," he cried; "she can't walk through that."

"Thou art a thoughtful boy. I am very much obliged to thee," said the lady when they reached the pavement, and Jack had set down his burden dryshod. "There is a sixpence for thee; I hope thee will spend it wisely."

Sixpence! The Quaker lady passed on into a druggist's shop close by without an idea how much that sum represented. Jack stood staring after her, absolutely dumb with amazement.

Only for an instant; then his cap went whirling up into the air, narrowly missing the druggist's red lamp.

"Hurrah! I'm off to see the wild beasts," he cried to the policeman, who chanced to be the person nearest at hand; better tell even him about it than tell nobody at all.

"All right," laughed the man; "but that's no reason why you should break the gas-lamps first. Off with you!"

Five minutes later, panting and breathless, but the happiest person in all Grove Road, Jack paid down his sixpence, and marched proudly past the banging drum right into the midst of the lions and tigers.

"I got a good sixpence-worth out of them," he told his friend Tom Smith next morning. "I didn't miss one single beast, and"—with great pride—"I stayed in till the very last minute; they had to come and turn me out before they could shut the gates."

SARAH PITT.

MY LITTLE REGIMENT.

I HAVE a little regiment
  Of gallant little men,
And not a man amongst them
  Has reached the age of ten.

They march along so briskly,
  They halt and "stand at ease,"
They're ready at "Attention!"
  The instant that I please.

They hold their heads so stiffly,
  They wheel from left to right;
And when they shoulder muskets,
  'Tis quite a thrilling sight.

Yet if they met a foeman
  No bigger than a bee,
I sadly fear my regiment
  Would hide behind a tree.

FOUR ON AN ISLAND.

By L. T. MEADE, *Author of "A World of Girls," "Polly: a New-Fashioned Girl," &c. &c.*

CHAPTER V.—"GOOD NIGHT" AND "GOOD MORNING."

THERE was a rustling noise heard at their right, a branch in the underwood cracked, then there was silence. The children's hearts beat loudly. We all know how terrifying even a faint noise in the dark can sound. We know all about that, when we lie in our snug beds, and hear the old chair creak, or the room door shake on its hinges, or listen to some other trifling sound, which would not draw our attention at all in the day-time. But if noises heard in the peaceful shelter of home are terrifying, how much more fearful must they be in such a position as the children now were in! Cold, hungry, just landed on an unknown shore, they had good reason to exercise their imaginations, and to know the terrible sensations of deadly fear.

"If I only had a gun!" said Ferdinand. Then with a great effort he steadied his voice. "Don't be frightened, little ones," he said; "even if there are wild beasts about, this great fire will keep them at bay. But that noise shows plainly how necessary it is that one or other of us should stay awake. Bell, will you take the early part of the night or the latter half?"

"I will take the latter half," said Isabel, "for the simple reason that I cannot, try as I will, keep my eyes open for another instant; even if wolves were on our track, I *must* lie down and sleep. Come, Rachel, your clothes are dry now. Creep into my arms, darling. I see plainly that you want your nap as badly as I do."

Rachel was about to obey, when happening to glance at her left, she uttered a piercing scream, and rushing to Ferdinand for protection, nearly threw him into the fire.

"Look! look! The eyes! the eyes!" she gasped. "By that hedge over there! Look, Fernie!"

"Don't choke me, Rachel," said Ferdinand. He unclasped her clinging hands. "There, I'll protect you," he whispered, "only don't scream! Now show me where you saw the eyes."

"Over there," panted the child.

They all looked in the direction Rachel pointed out. The darkness was now becoming very thick, but the deeper blackness of a great thicket of undergrowth was still to be seen.

"There, in the hedge," whispered Rachel, calling the thicket by the old familiar home name. The terrified child pointed with her finger. For a moment nothing was seen; then two large globes of fire glittered strangely, moved, and vanished.

"Let go, Rachel," whispered Ferdinand. His voice was stern. "Bell, take Rachel's hand," he murmured.

The globes of fire appeared again: they were nearer now by several feet. Without a second's warning, Fernie seized a great brand out of the fire, and flung it in the face of the advancing enemy. His sure aim told, for there was a fierce growl and snarl of pain, and then a hasty trampling through the thicket. The children watched for nearly an hour for the re-appearance of the eyes, but they did not come.

"Now we will build up the fire; and, Bell, you shall sleep until two o'clock by my watch," said Ferdinand. "You had better keep Tony and Rachel both close to you, as then you will all sleep the warmer. See, there are no night dews round this capital fire of mine: the ground is as dry as it can be. Now, sound sleep to you all. I shall march up and down to keep myself awake."

Five minutes later the regular breathing of the three children showed that they were in the land of dreams. Ferdinand paced up and down, and attended to the fire, which consumed lots of fuel, for he thought it necessary to keep it very large and bright. No more fierce bright eyes appeared, and his first excitement dying away, poor Ferdinand had a hard task to keep himself awake. The desire for sleep became overpowering; he found himself walking in a dream. He felt half asleep even as he moved. Then, with a violent start, he fought against the fierce desire to lie down at any cost. He forced his tired brain to stay awake. He took to running instead of walking. This plan succeeded for a few minutes, but soon he began to run in a dream. His feet were almost numb. He was conscious of only one sensation: a fierce, frantic desire to sleep.

Poor Bell, slumbering softly on her hard pillow, with Rachel curled up to her breast, and Tony's little head resting on her shoulder, never to her dying day knew what suffering Ferdinand underwent during that first long watch.

"Oh, if only I had some cold water to dash my head into!" he muttered. "How long have they all been sleeping now, I wonder? Surely a long, long time. They went to sleep at ten o'clock—from ten to two is four hours. It must be midnight now—oh, long past midnight! I surely am brave enough to keep awake for another hour."

Ferdinand looked at his watch. Poor little watch!—it was a present from his godfather in England, and he valued it much, but at that moment he felt inclined to fling it to the ground, for the little faithful watch only pointed to a quarter to eleven.

Ferdinand had gone through tortures in the first three-quarters of an hour. How was he to endure the remaining three hours and a quarter?

At this moment, however, relief came to him in an unexpected way. He saw something which made his blood run cold, and quite banished all desire to sleep. The thing he saw was small—it crawled along the ground. When it came nearer it stood still, then raised itself on its hind legs and pointed what looked in the firelight like little arms at Ferdinand. It was very uncouth in form, had a face with a most horrible expression, and large hideous goggle eyes.

Ferdinand's heart stood still for a minute. The creature he saw looked so queer, and so like a gnome in the uncertain light. Then venturing a little nearer, he recognised what it was. He had often heard the traders who visited his father's farm speak of the hideous and repulsive land-crabs, and felt sure that he was at last face to face with one.

With one? Not only with one; fifty at least of the ugly creatures were stealthily approaching, creeping out of holes in the ground, and coming up into the bright light of the fire, where they all showed their ugly faces, rolled

their eyes, and pointed their pincers angrily at Ferdinand.

"I shan't feel inclined to sleep any longer," he sighed. "I shall have enough to do keeping these horrid brutes at bay. Why, already some of them are creeping up to Isabel's side. Ha, ha, you wretch! so you think you are going to nip poor Tony's little fingers?" Ferdinand seized the heavy branch of a fallen tree, and found to his relief that the land-crabs were not difficult to kill; further, that when he killed several, the others were quiet for a while, as the horrid creatures instantly began eating their dead brothers.

The remaining three hours of Fernie's watch were therefore spent in active exercise, but he was much disturbed now with the fear that he ought not to sleep at all. How could Bell overcome these monsters? But, on the other hand, how could he keep moving for the entire night?

Ferdinand was debating in his own mind whether he should wake Isabel or not, when she settled the point by sitting up, and looking at him.

"It's two o'clock, isn't it, Fernie?" she said. The poor boy could not help springing to her side with an exclamation of delight.

"Oh, Bell, how good of you to wake! And how could you possibly guess the exact moment?"

Isabel laughed cheerfully.

"You forget," she said. "I always had the power of waking when I pleased, and to-night it seemed to me that I never for an instant lost the knowledge that I must take up my watch at two o'clock. Now lie down, Fernie, and sleep like a top. As for me, I feel as fresh as a daisy."

"You are a brave girl, Bell. I don't think I ever met anyone like you, but—but—I don't think I ought to let you do it."

"Not let me do it? What in the world do you mean? Lie down this minute, Fernie. Even in the firelight I see that you are fit to drop."

"Bell, dear, don't scream or wake the children, but just look behind you—there, to your right." Bell turned; she was as plucky as any girl of thirteen could be, but even she uttered a smothered cry when she saw rows of terrible goggle eyes all gazing at her, while the firelight lit up the hideous expression of some twenty or thirty frightful faces.

"Is this place a kind of enchanted island?" said Bell. "What—what are these—these horrors?"

She really turned pale, and her firm hand, which Ferdinand clasped, trembled.

"Don't be frightened," he said at once; "these hideous creatures are only land-crabs. You must have heard father's friend, Mr. Anderson, speak of them. You know he said some islands not far from the coast were infested by them. You need not be too much afraid of them, Bell; they are not really dangerous unless one is asleep; and they are easily killed. I have slaughtered several."

"Oh, you have spent your night in that way? No wonder you look so worn out. Now do lie down at once, and go to sleep."

"Bell, you cannot mean that you will fight the land-crabs alone?"

"I certainly mean nothing else. I have as good an aim as you have. I never miss a stroke, and I don't believe I know what fear is. If the creatures won't yield to my blows, I will try what a lighted torch from our great fire will do for them. Seriously, Fernie, you must go to sleep at once, or you'll be ill, and then I shall have to protect us all, which will be much harder work than keeping off a few land-crabs. Lie down now. I promise you that none of you shall have a pinch from them."

Ferdinand was too weary to say anything more. He lay down by Rachel's side, and instantly fell into the deepest and most profound slumber.

It was nearly half-past two now, and before long Bell knew the day would break. Ferdinand had killed so many of the land-crabs that the others were a little afraid of coming forward, so Bell had not such a bad time as he had with them. The approaching daylight, too, made them less and less inclined to leave their haunts, and Isabel had time to consider the most pressing question of the moment: namely, what they were to have for breakfast.

"If the worst comes to the worst, we must eat the land-crabs," she murmured, "but I do trust

we are a long way off having to satisfy our hunger with such a meal. Now, the first thing is to find water, and then fish. In a place like this the fish will be easily caught. Well, I shall wait till it is six o'clock by Ferdinand's watch. Then I shall wake Tony. He is a dear little fellow, and in some ways has more nerve than Rachel. He shall sit up and brandish a stick about to keep the crabs off, while I go and explore. Oh, what a sunrise! worth even coming to a desolate place like this to see."

The rising of the sun filled Bell's heart with a great rush of gratitude and love and courage.

It seemed to her that she had never been nearer to God. The sky overhead, the sweet warm breeze of the awakening day, the sparkle of rosy light on the waves, all told of His presence. Bell did not feel lonely. She even sang as she paced up and down by the watch-fire.

The sun rose higher, and she could look around her. The little plateau on which the children had spent the night was a very ugly and desolate place. Frowning cliffs rose up at its back; it seemed to lead nowhere but to the shore, and was itself only thinly covered with a coarse kind of grass, while the ugly and misshapen trees from which the children had secured their firewood were most of them dead. The great gaunt cliffs at the back of the plateau had not a scrap of vegetation on them. From where Bell stood she could scarcely see any other point of the land, and her first fear was that the little bay on which they had landed led nowhere but to this hideous desolate spot from which there seemed no outlet.

"But I won't meet trouble half-way," murmured Bell. "I may be mistaken, and when I really know will be time enough to fret."

Then she took down her thick hair, and refreshed herself by unplaiting it and plaiting it up anew. It was very long: it reached to her knees; and one land-crab came up and nipped at it with his pincers.

"I must get the better of you, you hideous little monsters!" said Bell, and she laughed so merrily, and used the branch of the tree which Ferdinand had provided her with to such excellent effect, that the horrid creatures thought it best to leave her alone, and sidle away over the grass

Soon after six o'clock Bell woke Tony, and told him what she wanted him to do. He entered with great spirit into all her plans, and seemed rather to enjoy the prospect of a fight with the crabs. But the creatures were now comparatively quiet, and giving Tony instructions to wake Ferdinand if there were the slightest need, Bell set off on her journey of discovery.

Thinking it best not to be quite defenceless, she selected a large stick from amongst the firewood, and then ran quickly down the sloping path from the plateau to the beach. At another time she would have stopped with a cry of delight to gather up some of the beautiful shells which lay scattered about in all directions; but now her thoughts were otherwise occupied, and her first care was to reach the picnic basket, and see what crumbs of provisions were left.

Bell had pulled the basket up well out of reach of the tide the night before, and it still lay on its side where she had left it. The little girl opened it carefully. She saw that, thanks to her skilful packing, very little of the crockery was smashed. She took Ferdinand's box of carpenter's tools and put it carefully aside, and then she extracted from the wreckage of crumbs and torn paper the following useful and welcome articles. A small flat tin kettle and a tin tea-pot—these had been used to make tea the day of the picnic; two blue mugs with "Rachel" and "Tony" painted on them in gilt letters; a large white breakfast cup and saucer, two plates, three knives, four tea-spoons, four forks, a large pie-dish, a china pot, which still contained a small portion of butter, and another which held the remainder of some strawberry jam. Besides these things, there was the precious little box of mixed pepper and salt, a packet of white sugar, a canister containing about a quarter of a pound of tea, and the glass bottle which held the precious supply of water, but which was now empty.

"And that is all," said Bell, "except these crusts and crumbs, and tiny bits of broken biscuit. If I could only manage to get some water we could have a cup of delicious tea all round, but alas! what is there of a solid nature to eat? Well, well, there is nothing for it but for me to go and explore those glistening pools

A TUSSLE WITH THE ENEMY. (*See p.* 150.)

over there, and see if I can induce some of the fish to come and be cooked for breakfast."

Taking a handful of broken biscuit and crusts in her pocket, and hastily securing a ball of worsted and a couple of fish-hooks which Ferdinand had stowed away in a corner of the basket, Isabel scrambled over the rocks in search of her breakfast. They were most of them very slippery, being covered with a kind of green seaweed, but Bell was sure-footed and careful, and seeing nothing worth troubling herself to catch in the pools near at hand, she ventured out farther and farther, until at last she was looking down into a deep clear basin of water.

She had seldom seen a more lovely sight than now greeted her eyes. The water here was from twelve to twenty feet deep, but the white sand could be distinctly seen at the bottom, and the sides were thickly clothed with seaweeds, as beautiful and varied in colour as flowers.

Bell could see several fish darting in and out among the seaweeds, and now, in high spirits, she sat down on the summit of a rock, and prepared to bait and get ready her line. She knew a little about fishing, and had not much difficulty in securing some fish, which resembled small trout in appearance, and looked good to eat.

When she had captured three or four, she put her precious worsted and hooks back into her pocket, carried her fresh fish up the beach, and fearing the attacks of the land-crabs even here, put the fish for safety into the picnic basket.

Now if only she could find water! She raised her head, looked up at the plateau, which she examined as well as she could from below, then walked to one extreme end of the little bay. It was a crescent in shape, and Bell was attracted by a noise which sounded to her practised ear somewhat different from the ceaseless roar of the breakers.

This, too, was a continuous roar, but Bell guessed and hoped that it proceeded from a different cause. As she approached the extreme point of the semicircle, she saw, with a beating thankful heart, all her hopes fulfilled. A beautiful cascade of living water was rushing down a deep ravine in the mountain side to the sea.

"How thankful I am!" exclaimed Bell. "We can live now. Fish to eat, water to drink! Oh, I feel the happiest girl in the world!"

She rushed back to the picnic basket to fetch the tin kettle and glass water-bottle, and then, with some anxiety—for the task was not an easy one—she approached near enough to the foaming cascade to fill the kettle and the bottle, and to get drenched herself.

"But that is not of the smallest consequence in such warm air as this," laughed the merry girl. "Really, I am so hot that wet clothes are rather a refreshment."

She took a deep draught of the pure delicious water, filled up the glass bottle again, and hurried back with her precious supply for breakfast.

CHAPTER VI.—THE BAY OF ISABEL.

BELL debated in her own mind whether she would prepare breakfast on the plateau or on the beach.

"We shall have much fewer land-crabs on the beach," she thought, "but, on the other hand, we want our fire to boil our kettle and grill the fish. On the whole, I fear I must choose the plateau, and as there is a lot to be done, and as I do want to have things fairly comfortable when Ferdinand and Rachel awake, I must bustle about all I can."

Here a childish voice was heard calling to Bell from the edge of the plateau.

"Isabel, most of the crabs have gone home to their breakfasts, I think. May I come down and help you? I am so tired of listening to Fernie's snores."

"Come along!" shouted Isabel back, and the little boy scampered down the narrow path to the beach, followed by the excited and jubilant Mungo.

"Look here what I have found," said Bell. "Water and fish. We'll all have such a splendid breakfast, including Mungo. But now I am inclined to put you on duty, poor little wee dog. You must go back to Ferdinand and Rachel, Mungo, and sit as close to them as possible, and bark when the crabs come up.

Do you hear? You have to bark very loudly at the crabs. Now, there's a good dog; run back. Home, Mungo, home! Home to Fernie. You understand."

Certainly Mungo did. He wagged his stumpy tail, and looked half confidingly, half sorrowfully, at Bell. He would have so much preferred scampering about on the beach, and watching the preparations which Bell and Tony were making. But duty always reigned supreme in his brave little terrier heart, and when Bell said once more, "Home, Mungo! and bark at the crabs as loud as you can!" he went slowly up the cliff, with his tail tucked between his legs.

"Now, Tony, we must be frightfully busy," said Bell. "Help me to carry all this crockery down to the first pool we see, in order to give it a good wash. While you are washing and drying (here is a large tea-cloth which cook put away for us) I'll clean the fish for breakfast. If we are very quick we may have things ready by the time Ferdinand and Rachel wake."

"We won't lose a second," said Tony; "I'll help you all I can. I'm so very glad you woke me, Bell. I do so like to be useful."

"Yes, of course you do," said Bell. "And now, don't let us talk any more, but set to work."

An hour of great industry followed, at the end of which time wonders had been worked. In a clear space, not too near the fire, Bell had laid three large table-napkins; she had secured them with stones, and then placed on this novel table-cloth her precious crockery. The kettle sang and steamed away on a clear bed of red ashes, and a delicious teapotful of tea stood in a warm corner to brew. The broken crusts were made the most of on a plate, and the four fish were grilling merrily on the hot ashes.

"And now, Tony, we'll wake them," said Bell. "Everything is ready. We must do without cream in our tea, it is true, but isn't it a breakfast for a king?"

Tony was excited beyond measure in his hunger and delight. The land-crabs came up and sat in rows, and pointed their pincers at the meal. They did not, however, venture too near, for Mungo, whose conduct was really heroic, kept dashing in and out among them, barking fiercely, and utterly disregarding their attempts to secure his sharp nose between their pincers.

The grilling of the fish, the barking of Mungo, the trampling of Bell and Tony's footsteps, and the crackling and roaring of the great fire had no effect whatever in disturbing Ferdinand and Rachel. But something else did cause them at last to turn and open their wondering eyes. This something was the delicious smell of the partly-cooked fish. Ferdinand sat up, and looked around him as in a dream.

"Oh, I had such a horrid time!" he said. "I thought we were starving on a desert island, and—why, what is the matter? where am I? What has happened?"

"You are very likely on a desert island," said Bell, laughing, "but you are certainly not going to starve at present. Come and say grace for our good breakfast."

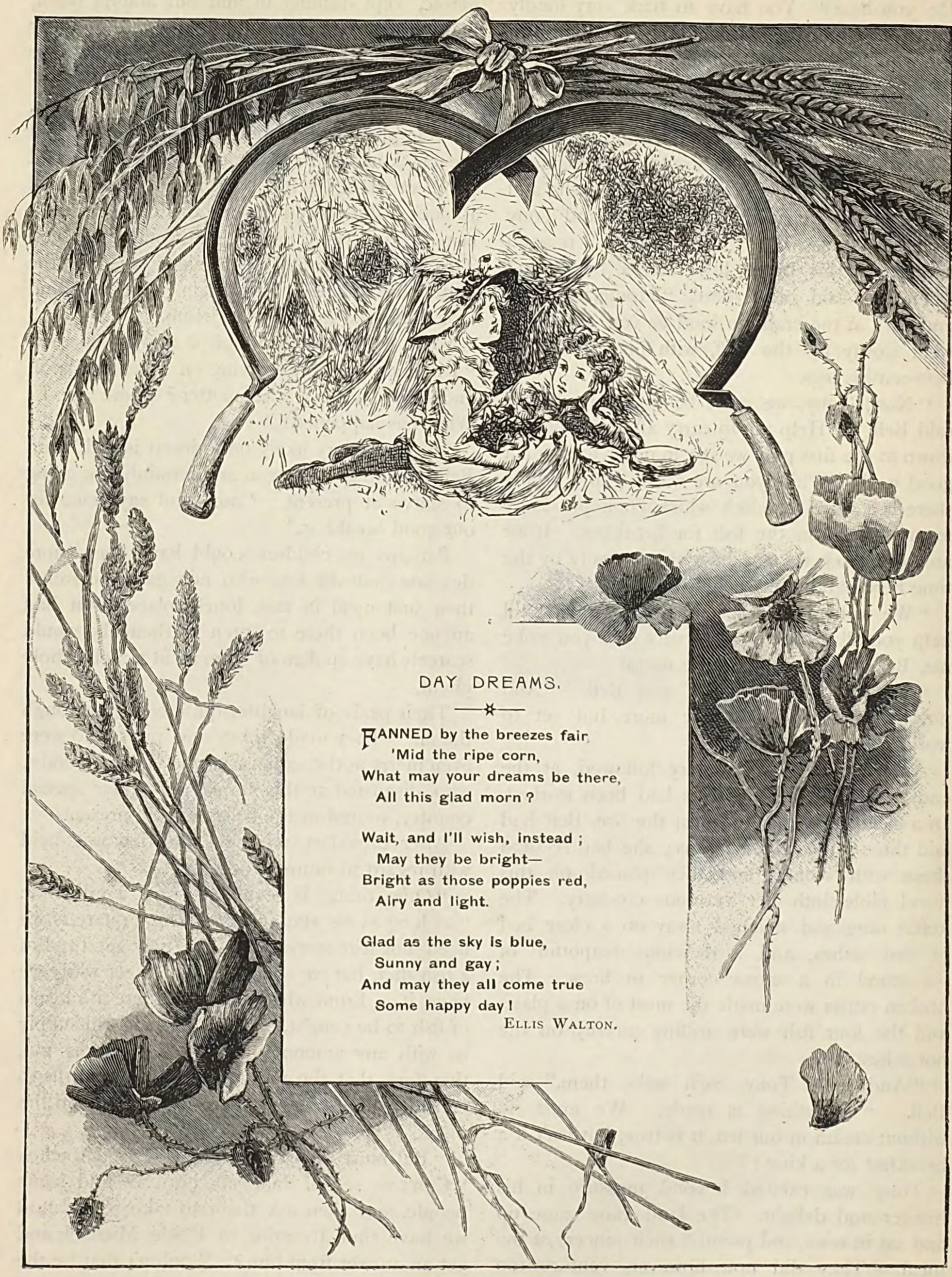
Perhaps no children could have been more desolate than the four who now gathered round their first meal in this lonely place. But had anyone been there to listen to them, he would scarcely have spoken of them as in a melancholy plight.

Their peals of laughter quite echoed through the air. They made jokes and puns, and were even merry at the expense of the ugly land-crabs, who, disgusted at this inroad into their special country, retired in the sulks, for the present.

After breakfast a solemn meeting was held with regard to future proceedings.

"One thing is evident," said Ferdinand: "as long as we stay in our present quarters we need not fear starvation. We may get tired of a fish diet, but we shan't die of hunger while we have it. From what Bell says, there are heaps of fish to be caught, and the cascade will supply us with any amount of water. It strikes me, therefore, that the most pressing thing for us to consider at present is where we shall spend the night."

"But must we stay here at all?" said Rachel. "Can't we set off and walk until we find some people, and then ask them to take us in until we have time to write to Uncle Michael, and get an answer from him? Wouldn't that be the best thing to do? for I know I shall get tired of



DAY DREAMS.

FANNED by the breezes fair
'Mid the ripe corn,
What may your dreams be there,
All this glad morn?

Wait, and I'll wish, instead;
May they be bright—
Bright as those poppies red,
Airy and light.

Glad as the sky is blue,
Sunny and gay;
And may they all come true
Some happy day!

ELLIS WALTON.

staying in this ugly place. I so dislike the land-crabs: it makes me almost ill to look at them; and I know I shall detest eating nothing but fish without bread, and drinking tea without milk."

"Oh, come, Rachel," said Ferdinand. "We must put down grumbling at once. Don't cry, my dear little cousin"—here he stooped and kissed Rachel on her forehead—"but you know you'll make us all weak and good for nothing if you are not jolly and cheerful. Just make up your mind to think there's no food so delicious as fish, and nothing nicer to drink than tea without milk. Of course if we happen to come across any people we'll instantly do what you advise, and ask them to take us in; but my opinion is that we are the only human beings here.

"I think this," continued Ferdinand, "because the land-crabs are so horridly fearless and troublesome, and they are such detestable creatures, that if there were any men about they would certainly have got rid of them before now. What is your opinion, Bell?"

"I am afraid you are right, Fernie," answered Isabel, in a thoughtful voice. "In any case, even if we are on the mainland, we may not come across any other human beings for some days, and we had better prepare some sleeping-place for to-night. But what do you think of doing? It is hardly likely that we shall find an empty house anywhere to step into."

"If we had time," said Ferdinand, "I could, should, and would build a log hut for us, but as that is out of the question, I have thought of two things, one or other of which we must immediately do. The first I have not much hope about. It is this: that our poor old *Nancy* brig may have been washed up somewhere on the shore, and that, although she is scarcely likely to be fit to go to sea in again, I might be able to patch her up sufficiently to enable us to use her as a bedroom; for we might possibly float her into some quiet little nook, where we should at least be free from the horrid land-crabs."

"But I saw no sign of the *Nancy* brig when I looked up and down the shore this morning," said Tony.

"Nor did I," added Isabel.

"Well, well," continued Ferdinand, "if that hope quite fails, and the poor brave little boat has really gone to the bottom, the next thing for us to do is to search for a cave above high water mark—a cave with a floor of rock where no land-crabs can burrow—a cave with a narrow entrance, against which I can put something to secure us against the attacks of any wild animals: in which we can sleep for a night or two in peace. For I own, I object to having my hair pulled and my fingers pinched by those hideous little goggle-eyed men."

"I don't believe they are land-crabs at all," said Rachel. "I think they are a whole lot of hideous trolls marching up from their palace under the earth, to seize us and drag us down with them."

Ferdinand laughed, and rose to his feet.

"You may amuse yourself, Rachel, making up a real, live, true fairy-tale," he said; "but now it is time to be stirring. It's well that there's a bit of a breeze, so we shall none of us suffer from sunstroke. There is no help for it: we must divide our forces. Two of us must stay to guard our valuables, and two of us must set off on the work of exploring. Tony and Rachel, are you brave enough to stay here for a couple of hours, under Mungo's care?"

"If you please," said Rachel, "we'd much sooner go with you, Ferdinand."

"That's all very well, but you are not strong enough for the long walk which Bell and I may have to take. I don't think you are in much danger here, and we'll be back as soon as ever we can."

"I don't much like leaving the children by themselves, Fernie," said Bell.

"I don't believe there is the slightest fear," answered Ferdinand. "They must not let the fire out, and the smoke and flames will keep away wild animals, if there are any likely to arrive. Then in our present position we must learn to risk things, and try to choose whichever is the least dangerous course. You and I will have as much as we can do together to find a shelter for the night."

"And although I'd much rather go with you, I'm not really afraid, Bell," said Rachel, looking up at her cousin with a sweet sparkle of love in her eyes. Bell stooped down and kissed her.

"We'll arrange it so, then," she said. "Thank you, Rachie, for having so little fear, Now I'm going to leave you and Tony plenty to do. You must collect all the underwood you can possibly find, and place it ready either for our fire here, or to tie up in bundles to carry away to the cave, if Ferdinand and I are fortunate enough to find one. Then you must wash up the crockery, and pack it carefully in the picnic basket, and have everything in order to march forward the very instant we return and give you the word.

"Now, Ferdinand, I am ready to start. We will take two or three fishing-lines with us, in case we come to some pools where fish are plentiful. Good-bye, children; we'll be back as soon as ever we can."

Ferdinand and Bell ran down the steep path to the shore, and started off in fairly good spirits. They were both refreshed by their breakfast, and Ferdinand declared that his long sleep had done him lots of good.

The tide was now very far out, and the children saw, to their relief, that they could walk on the shore past the cascade, and that they need not fear, at low tide at least, being condemned to confine their space to the small bay and plateau.

When Ferdinand and Bell had passed beyond the sharp promontory which shut in the little bay to the left, they saw before them to a considerable distance the same bold and desolate coast; the rocks were steep and high, and the shore itself was broken by many small bays, which ran, some of them, a considerable distance inland.

The children quickly perceived that they could not long pursue their way by the shore; to get any real view of the place, they must endeavour to climb upwards.

This when they attempted it would be no easy task, for paths there were none, and the grass looked what it by-and-by proved, short and slippery as ice.

"Our present business," said Ferdinand, as he and Bell found themselves standing on a sharp point of rock which commanded a distant peep of the little bay they had just left—"our present business is not to climb or explore, but to find a cave. Do you see that bay right over there, Isabel? Notice how far it seems to run in under those heavy black rocks. Surely there must be caves under those rocks, and some of them must have rocky floors. Come along, Bell: I have a feeling that we shall find our bedroom at the back of that bay."

The bay in question turned out to be much farther off than the children had calculated. They had to walk for the greater part of a mile over very rough pebbles, and noticed, to their disgust, that even here the land-crabs had established a footing. When they had come to an end of this long bed of shingle they were obliged to climb over rocks as slippery as glass and as sharp as needles, but in the end, not without a few cuts and bruises, they reached the bay; and here they stood still, to draw long sighs of relief.

"Shake hands, Bell," said Ferdinand, in his cheery voice. "I verily believe ours are the first human feet which have pressed this soil. I christen this beautiful bay after you—it shall be known in future in all geography-books as the Bay of Isabel."

"We must give our island a name, too," said Isabel; "but time for that presently. Now let us examine our bay. How deep it is, and how beautiful! and what lovely shades those rocks cast over in that distant corner!—oh, and what shells! Fernie, Fernie, look—I do believe that's a baby turtle sprawling about over there. Well, if we can secure turtles' eggs we shall do."

"Our cave, first of all," said Ferdinand. "The night will be on us soon, and we must provide a shelter for ourselves, and then we have to go back and fetch the children. My dear wise sister, you must not have your head turned because you suddenly have a piece of land called after you."

The two children now began to explore the Bay of Isabel, which, compared to the little bay they had first landed in, possessed many advantages. Not the least of these were, as Ferdinand had hoped, caves not only under the dark rocks, but above them. These higher caves were well out of reach of the tide, and although a little difficult to get at, were safer on this account.

Ferdinand managed to climb up to one, and

with the aid of two or three of the precious wax matches, to explore it. It was really a hole about ten feet in length, eight feet across, and perhaps twelve feet in height, cut out of the solid rock. So clean and neat did it look that it might easily have been taken for the work of man.

Ferdinand gave a shout of delight when he found himself in this funny room. Popping out his head, he called to Bell, who stood below.

"Isabel's bower is found!" he exclaimed; "and I defy a troll"—for by this name the children had decided to speak of the land-crabs—"to find an entrance. Now, Bell, we will go back as fast as ever we can to Tony and Rachel, for we have a good long way to carry our small possessions, and although it is still early in the day, it is not a bit too early for the work that lies before us."

"There is one thing we must have," said Bell, "and that is, light to explore our cave, and clean it properly. I think I would rather sleep in the open air than lie down in that cave, with the sensation that a troll was hiding away in one of the corners, and pointing his pincers at me. What are we to do for a candle to explore our bed-chamber before we lie down each night?"

"Did you," asked Ferdinand suddenly, and in a somewhat anxious voice, "did you open my box of tools this morning?"

"No, of course not, Fernie; I was far too busy."

"Then I have a pleasing surprise for you. Stowed away there is a great coil of waxed taper. Uncle gave it to me when he was last at the farm, and I stuck it in, little guessing it would come into use to light up Isabel's bower."

"And what are we to do for a door to our house?" exclaimed Bell.

"Well, that is certainly a slight difficulty; but I shall make a wooden door presently, and for to-night I shall secure the entrance with the macintosh which belonged to poor Jim Salter. Now, do come back, Bell; I am so afraid of the tide rising and cutting off our way round the promontory."

As the two children were walking back Isabel made a sudden remark.

"Fernie, do you think we have landed on an island?"

"Yes, Bell, I do."

"And a desert island?"

"It certainly seems to be deserted?"

"You think we may have to remain here some time?"

"Yes."

Ferdinand's voice was very low and grave as he spoke. His dark eyes looked full into his sister's.

"Are you frightened, Fernie?" asked the girl.

"Not now—I was before I took that swim. But now I think God has forgiven me for disobeying my father and taking you all on board the *Nancy* brig. I feel afraid of nothing now."

Bell was silent for a few moments after Ferdinand had said these words. She knew they were almost wrung from him, for he was a very reserved boy, and she understood his nature well enough to be sure that she could best sympathise with him by silence.

"Fernie," she said, after a pause, "as soon as ever our father comes back he will certainly send and look for us."

"Yes, Bell."

"We must try and put up signals in all directions."

"Yes; I have been thinking of that; but do hurry on, the tide is coming in fast. I am so afraid that we shall not get round the point to our first bay."

The children now began to run; they were not a moment too soon: ten minutes later the path round the promontory which led into the little bay, which Ferdinand called Half-Moon Bay, would have been impassable; joyfully now they hurried across it, and climbed the plateau to join their companions.

Here, however, they stood still in astonishment. Rachel was seated by the ashes of the fire, which had gone quite out. She raised a white, scared, and tearful face as they approached her.

"Tony and Mungo are both lost!" she said.

(To be continued.)

NURSE IS OUT!

NURSE is out! Yes, nurse is out!
Of that there's not the slightest doubt!
The door went "bang!" not long ago,
And that's a proof, as well we know.
So now we'll have no end of fun:
The question is, what shall be done?
I think, while we alone remain,
We'll play a game at "railway train!"

Haul it out! Yes, haul it out!
The sofa's best, there's not a doubt;
No finer engine could we find,
And range the chairs close up behind.
The hearthrug, fender, poker, tongs,
Yes, each one to the train belongs;
For luggage we must surely take,
To show that we are wide awake!

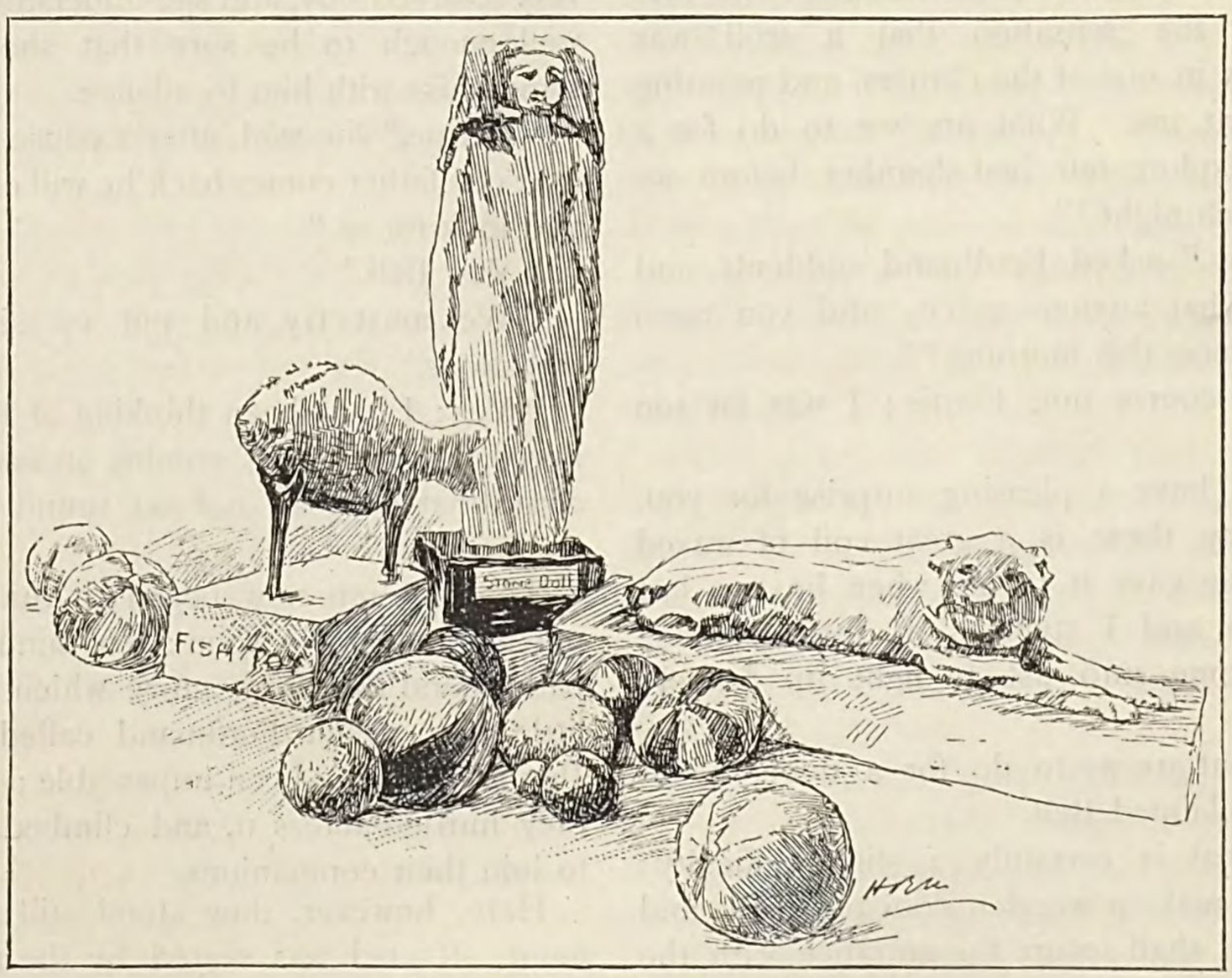
Whistle! shout! yes, whistle! shout!
To call the passengers about;
And now we're off along the track—
Hark! hush! that's nurse! she's coming back!
Oh! what to do we do not know,
For she will blame and scold us so!
She's here! it's "Off at once to bed!"
No, no, she's good, and laughs instead!

EDWARD OXENFORD.

TRAVELS IN CURIOSITY LAND.

TOYS AND GAMES OF THE PAST.

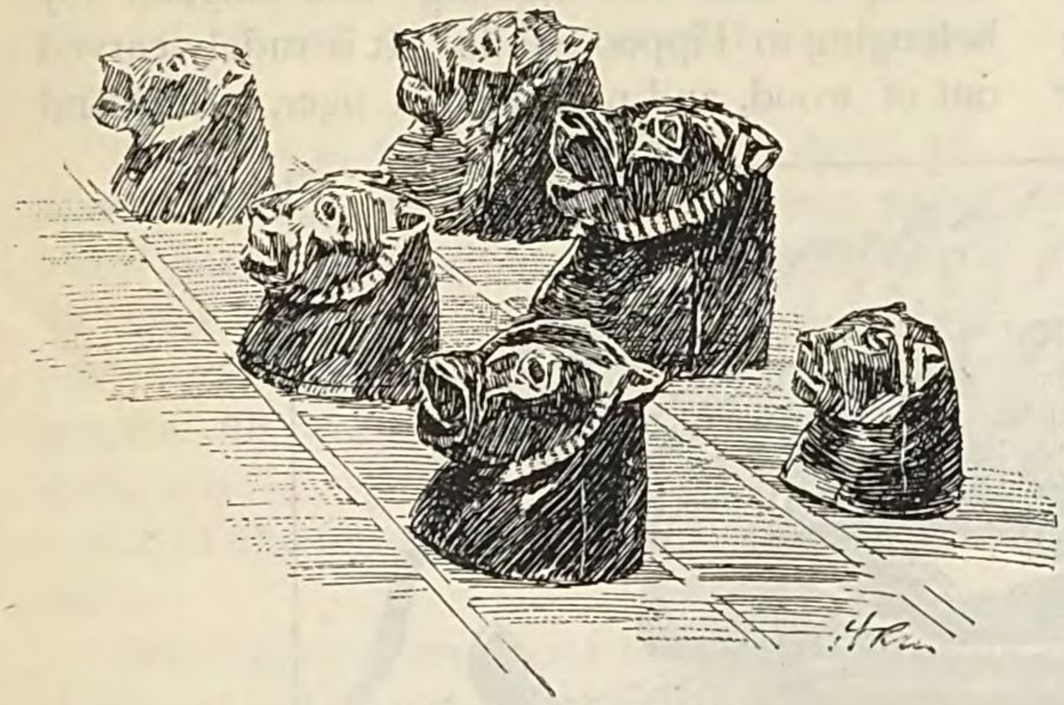
IN the course of your rambles in Curiosity Land, I have no doubt that many of you have stopped for a moment to have a peep at some of the playthings with which the little folk of past ages used to amuse themselves.



OLD EGYPTIAN TOYS (*p.* 161).

If we examine some of these old-time toys we shall see that they are very much like those in use at the present moment. There has been, of course, a wonderful development; the children of to-day have magnificent dolls with beautiful wax or porcelain heads, and eyes that open or shut as the doll is supposed to be either awake

or asleep ; there are some, even, that can speak and sing just as though they were alive. Then there are all kinds of animals, some of which



LION-HEADED DRAUGHTSMEN.

are made to perform clever tricks ; and little working models of steamboats and railway engines, and hundreds of other clever contrivances too well known to need describing.

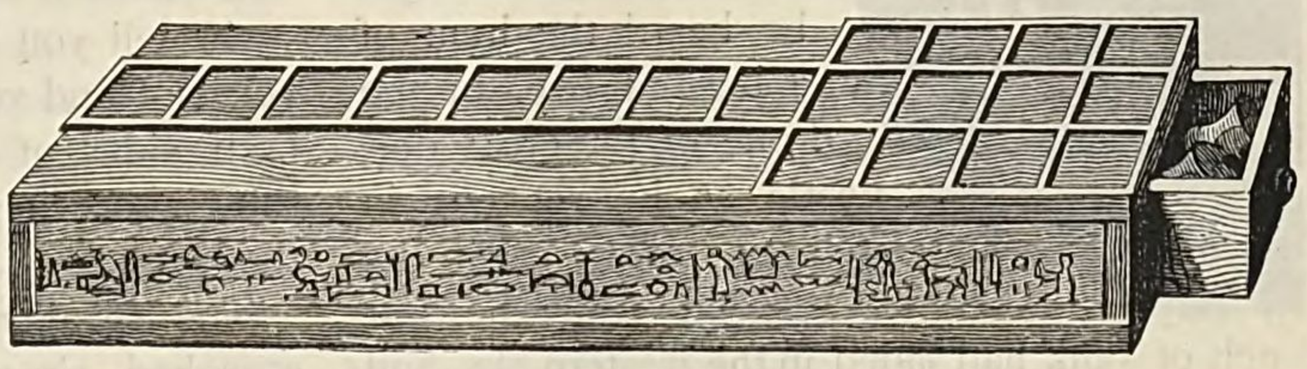
The children of Ancient Egypt, Rome, and Greece had none of these treasures, but they had their toys which, doubtless, were prized and valued by them as greatly as are those of to-day by the children of all nations. Some of the dolls of those early days in Egypt are made of clay. Others are formed out of hard stone, whilst some are constructed of wood with movable heads, arms, and legs, which must have been considered quite a wonderful performance. Besides dolls of all sizes, there were pretty balls made of palm leaves and covered with skin ; bronze and wooden toy birds that nodded their heads : toys made of stone or clay in the shape of fish, dogs, lions, and other animals ; drums, cymbals, whistles, whips, and numerous other playthings.

It is curious to note how some of the games of the early ages have been handed down to the present time. The game, for instance, known to most of us as "Odd or Even" was also a favourite of the young Egyptian, and many of the little counters that he used are still preserved in the British Museum. There is also the game of draughts, which was played on a chequered board in the earliest times. The poor children were content with draughtsmen and boxes made out of rough pieces of clay ; but the richer ones usually had beautifully carved lion-headed draughtsmen and boxes similar to those shown in the accompanying illustrations.

The young Greeks, too, were well provided with toys and games for their amusement. The toys were chiefly dolls made of baked clay—the arms and legs being jointed with string and, therefore, movable. They had a favourite game called "Chytrinda," which has been preserved through many ages, and is now played by boys of to-day under the well-known name of "Puss in the Corner." In France the game is called "Quatre Coins" or four corners.

Both in the old game and in the modern version, five players are required, one occupying each of the four corners, while the fifth player stands in the middle. In Ancient Greece he wore an earthen pipkin on his head and was called "Pot" ; in France at the present day he is the "Nigaud" or simpleton, and by us he is called "Puss." To guess the number of fingers another held up was also a favourite amusement, and this, too, is frequently played at the present time. So you see how carefully the character of the amusements and the playthings of the very earliest ages has been maintained in the toys and games in use to-day.

Some curious toys have been invented during the present century. The same inventor who constructed the mechanical flute-player, of which you were told in our chat on Musical Instruments (page 29 of this volume), also invented a toy duck, which became talked about all over Europe. It was so well constructed that at



EGYPTIAN DRAUGHT BOX.

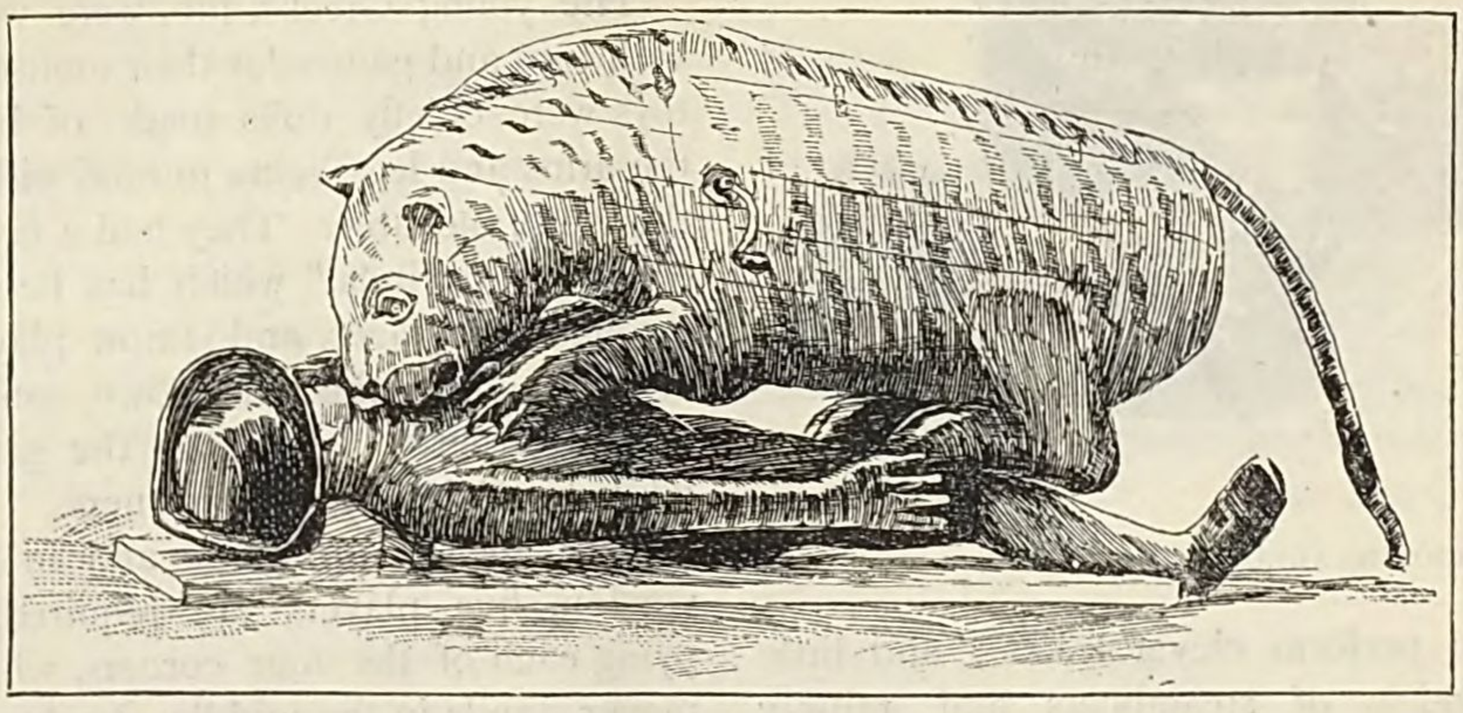
first sight it was difficult to distinguish it from a living bird.

In the year 1809 at Vienna a large toy representing a performing trumpeter was

exhibited. On being set in motion, it played all the cavalry calls in use in the Austrian army, then a march and other music. The figure then retired, and in a few minutes reappeared in the dress of a trumpeter of the French Guard. It then played French cavalry calls, and two or three marches in a full and rich tone, which, it is said, was not equalled by that produced from a trumpet by human lungs and lips.

In the Indian Museum you will see a very strange toy, which was specially invented for the amusement of a cruel Indian prince. After the conquest of Seringapatam, a number of tigers were found in the palace yard; they were ordered to be shot for fear of accidents. In one apartment was the large and singular toy belonging to Tippoo Sahib. It is rudely carved out of wood, and represents a tiger, killing and about to devour a British soldier, who lies helpless under its claws. In the interior is a kind of organ, which was turned by a handle and produced notes intended to represent the growls of the tiger, and the moans of the victim. Happily it is seldom that the inventive genius of man is put to such bad use.

H. Wood Smith.



TIPPOO'S TOY TIGER.

SALMO'S PLAN, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

A FAIRY STORY.

IT was an August evening, and the concert of Nature's many voices was nearly over.

Hereand there might be heard the hum of a belated bee, or the drone of the great dor-beetle as he set out in search of prey; but the birds were at rest, the last touch of pink had faded in the western sky, and twilight was creeping over the world with noiseless steps.

The stream alone sang on, since its mission in life was to flow and make music for the benefit of certain creatures whom this story more especially concerns. To this stream then, reader, turn eyes and ears, for it may be wondrous things are going on there in the fading light, though only he who loves the pure and beautiful has power to discern them.

'I tell you it is true," said a harsh croaking voice; "and you may believe me, because I see both sides of the question, which everybody can't, since they cannot live out of as well as in the water."

The speaker, in her satiny olive-green suit, crouched almost hidden among a tangle of rushes and star-like weeds close to the water, and at first sight it seemed as if she must have spoken to herself, for no other living thing was visible. But look nearer, put on the spectacles of a willing heart, and listen. For there was a

flash of silver, followed by a splash distinctly heard above the monotonous ripple of the stream, and the reason of it was a young trout who leaped at a fly, then swallowed it before he allowed himself to make rejoinder to the last speech.

"Mrs. Rana, seeing's believing!—even you must own that; and not many evenings ago I heard a couple of white-skinned monsters on the bank yonder say, 'What a famous stream this is for trout!' Of course, it was made on purpose for us, and each day shows me the truth of it."

She of the olive coat shook her head with a smile.

"Hearing's not seeing, my dear," she observed sagely; "and you should believe nothing that falls on your ears, in case the words may have a twisted meaning. What an odd thing it is that young folk should be so unwilling to take the gift of older people's experience, instead of buying it, and often very dearly. It's conceit, Salmo, that makes them so stupid, and it may prove fatal if over-indulged in."

"Pooh! nonsense!" grumbled the other, for he was in a talkative mood; "and as to denying our right to the stream, you might as well say I am not cousin to King Kipper, though my very name proves the fact."

"Remember your second name," was the prompt retort; "anyone called Fario must not presume on his relationship, or he will get a well-deserved snub. Well, as I told you before, there *is* danger here—constant danger, though you may be too small at present to see or be troubled by it."

Little Salmo seemed struck by the earnest tone of these words, and he paused in the shadow of a stone close to the speaker.

"What you say may be true," said he; "but if so, the way to avoid danger is simple enough. You know my young cousins, the Peels, are dressed just like myself, silver waistcoat, crimson spots, and all, so that none can tell the difference between us when we happen to be together. Well, I propose to go to court, to leave this part for a time, and join the princes when they go down to the sea for change. Nobody will be the wiser for one more or less in number, and by-and-by——"

Here, however, Salmo's voice faltered, and there was a flicker in the shallow water where he lay, for a shudder passed down his back to the very tip of his tail.

Mrs. Rana laughed outright, made a jump nearly twenty times her own height, and disappeared into the mud among the rushes.

"Ha, ha, ha!" croaked she, "young folk think they can do anything and are everything. Wait and see what Queen Shadder will say if you succeed in getting to court."

Salmo felt rather uncomfortable for a few minutes, but he soon consoled himself in leaping for flies and hunting along the bank for beetles or larvæ, in which he delighted.

"Heigh-ho," sighed he, "it's no use worrying oneself just because old ladies choose to croak. They can't help it, after all, and I've been born with sharp enough wits to look after myself."

With which comforting thought the trout dismissed the matter from his mind, and spent a lively night with his companions of all ages.

When the sun rose, and began his royal progress across heaven from east to west, Salmo went to rest under the warm bank, and lay snugly there for hours, only darting out from time to time till the shadows lengthened and gnats held their mazy dance over pools made by moss-trimmed boulders among the wavelets.

A few weeks slipped peacefully away, and Salmo, by dint of much pondering on his own importance, came to the conclusion that his cousins of royal blood might be pleased to claim kinship with such a pretty, well-made creature, if he introduced himself to their notice.

"There are plenty of them further down, I know," he argued; "and before long their majesties will be on their way to the sea. I shall start this evening, and they can hardly object to one of the family joining them. I am not a vulgar gudgeon, nor a pushing stickleback, nor an ugly miller's thumb. No, my manners and appearance are all that can be desired, and I can hold my own with anybody, thanks to being of such good family!"

"Where are you off to in such a hurry?" inquired Salmo's brothers, who were making their way as usual up stream, and were surprised to see one of their number shooting like an arrow in an opposite direction.

"Silly little fish," whispered the south wind, ruffling the surface of the water; "conceit blinds more people than anything else."

"There is no more danger for you than for us," said creamy meadow-sweet and crimson willow-herb from the bank. "You had better stay where Providence placed you, and not delude yourself that it is wiser to push your way in the world."

Salmo heard, but heeded not, and answered nothing. The stream grew wider and swifter, the boulders larger, and the banks, though broken in parts, were much higher; so the traveller knew he must now keep his eyes open for a sight of his royal cousins. Salmo had never ventured so far before, only self-importance helps people on wonderfully, if they have enough of it; and presently the little fellow was rewarded by catching a glimpse of some one in a dark blue coat dotted with black buttons, trimmed with silver grey, and set off by a pale pink waistcoat.

"That must be the king," thought Salmo, and his heart went pit-a-pat. "What a splendid creature! He must weigh several pounds if he weighs an ounce."

There was no more time for comment, because a voice suddenly addressed the adventurer from a pool in the shadow of an overhanging tree.

"Who are you? What business have you here?"

"I—I—am in the king's highway," was the modest reply, as the speaker glanced uneasily about to see who questioned him. "And I came to—to—call on my cousins the Peels. Are they anywhere near here?"

Just then Salmo's eye fell on him of the pool, and his blood ran cold, for he saw an enormous pike spotted with green and yellow.

"If you weren't so small, and if I had not just dined so well," said this monster, "I should make short work of you for your impudence. As it is, you will probably be sent about your business in a way you richly deserve by those who have the best right to do it, for here comes Queen Shadder with some of the princes."

Hardly were these words said, when, trembling all over, Salmo heard a rushing sound, and next moment he was nearly surrounded by the royal party, the younger members of which began poking at him curiously with their noses while they made personal remarks.

"Who can this be, mother?"

"He's dressed just like some of us, so he must belong to the family. But he came down stream, and we're going up. How's that?"

"And he's all alone—why's this?"

"He's quaking like duckweed in a gale! I do believe the creature's frightened!"

"Hush, children," said the queen. "Clear the way, and let me see the stranger."

Another moment, and Salmo stood in the royal presence with a number of Peels and Grilse in a half-circle behind him.

"Now then," inquired her majesty, "what do you want here? Only truth, if you please, for thought is language in water-world, so lies will avail you nothing."

Poor Salmo was in a fine fix. He had never counted on the possible meeting with Mr. Pike, who is nicknamed "the river pig" because of his greediness. He had never reckoned on falling in with Queen Shadder herself, and had altogether counted too much on his powers of fascination, which in the present pinch were no good whatever.

"I—I—I—wished to travel—to——" began the intruder, stammering, with downcast eyes; but having got so far, he was rudely interrupted.

"Say no more," snapped the chief listener, flapping her tail impatiently, "I see plainly how it is. Thanks to your dress being like that of some of my younger children, you hoped to pass yourself off as one of our party when we went to the sea. It is true you *are* a cousin, though small and of no importance to anybody except yourself, thanks to your unbounded conceit. Go home then, learn to live for others, forget yourself, and, above all, never attempt to push yourself where you are not wanted."

Ashamed and crestfallen, Salmo obeyed without another word, and when he found himself once more safely among his brothers near the meadow-sweet and rushes he felt that he had learned a lesson for life. No doubt he profited by it, for this is the end of all lessons; but not having seen Salmo since, I cannot tell you for certain.

S. M. Crawley-Boevey.

NEP THE HERO.

"WELL, Mat!"

"I don't like to be called Mat; 'tisn't my name, and 'tis like a door-mat."

"Then I suppose you'd like to be called Martha.

"'Martha and Mary went down to the sea,
A big fish swallowed them, fiddle-de-dee!'

"Is that your game?"

"Yes, it is indeed; that is just what I want."

"To be gobbled up by a fish?"

"No, to go down by the sea, and *wide* all the way in your barrow, same as I did yesterday."

"But then I'm not Mary—and, if I were you, I'd say ride, not *wide*, like a baby."

"No, you're Dick, and I'm not a baby."

"Well, put on your tile, and let's be off."

"I haven't got a tile—I shall put on my hat; mamma says you're a slangy boy, and that's much worse than being like a baby."

"THE BOY TOOK HER A LONG JAUNTING DRIVE" (*p.* 166).

Dick snapped his fingers at her. He felt very big, down here by the sea, a manly boy of seven, taking care of five-years-old Mattie; paddling, and running races on the shore with the other boys, keeping an eye upon his charge the while, as she played with the other little ladies, bathing their dollies, and so on. Dick always said "Faugh!" to this nonsense, as he called it, and turned away on his heel, in boyish contempt.

Mamma was lying down with a headache, nurse busy with baby; the afternoon laughed in its golden beauty, the sea beckoned them, it required little coaxing from Mattie to induce Dick to get his wheelbarrow, and to give her a triumphal ride down to the sunny beach. But, somehow, to-day their little friends had "other fish to fry," to quote Dick—for they were promenading with their nurses, watching Punch and Judy, and the like—so the wee man and maiden betook themselves to their own devices, all by themselves.

First, Dick launched his boat, the *Princess*, with Midge, Mattie's baby doll, as her only passenger. Dick was captain and crew all in one, holding the skittish bark in check with a piece of string. Well, there was soon a terrible wreck, and the *Princess* went down before their eyes, bearing the hapless Midge to a watery grave.

"Oh! you're a great silly captain, to let your ship *weck*; I do *fink* I could be better captain than you. Oh! Midgie, Midgie!" and Mattie stretched out her baby hands in mimic grief, as Midge cut a last caper on a laughing wave, and went down with her treacherous bark.

"You wouldn't—you wouldn't even have launched her," said Dick crossly; but, still, he was sorry for the loss of his boat, sorry for the fate of poor Midge, and at seeing his sister standing and looking so disconsolately out over the sea.

Of course the sea laughed over it all, as it has done before and since over wreck and disaster.

"Let's go round to the Mermaid Corner," suggested Dick kindly. That was a bend in the shore, where Mattie often fancied she could see mermaids bathing and dancing, in the rainbow-tinted spray, in the sunshine; nay, some-

times she thought she heard them call to her—

"Come out, little maiden, come out to me."

But to-day her eyes were too dewy to see any such fairy sights, so she answered—

"No, Dick, I only want to *wide* quietly in your barrow"; and the boy took her a long jaunting drive in the other direction, without reproving her for that provokingly babyish word *wide*.

"Let's go to the Sunset Rock," said he presently.

The Sunset Rock was a rock running out into the sea, always wreathed about with red light at sunset; safe for the children to clamber over when the tide was out, as now, but, when in, the waters swept over it, even at its highest point.

"Yes, that would be *bootiful*," assented Mattie; so thither they went, leaving the barrow at the foot of the rock, as they mounted, to wait for their return.

"Oh! I *fink* I can see poor Midge," cried Mattie, eagerly scanning the waters from the rock.

But Dick said, "No, she's safe enough at the bottom before now."

"I wish a good mermaid would find her, same as that one who saved people in drowning ships."

"But Midge isn't people, you know, she's only a bunch of old rags; but I suppose that's quite as good as a soulless mermaid," replied Dick.

"Soulless means nothing inside her to whisper to her tongue what to say, isn't it?" lisped Mattie.

"Yes, soulless means without a soul," he replied.

So they chatted, perched on the rock, like two sea-birds, while the afternoon sunshine deepened and glowed, and the tide began to run in, as if to catch some of its glory, ere it died.

What if it cut off the two little idlers, flowing in between the rock and the beach! What if it tossed the barrow aside and sent it drifting, as if it never would be wanted again! Dick was the first to see what it was doing, and cried—

"Mattie, I do believe the tide has come in too far for us to get to shore."

How he clutched her hand, how they fled, back along the rock, two fugitives fleeing—from what? Ah! lap-lap-lap went the water all round the island of rock, the barrow was gone, and they were caught as if in a trap. No boat in sight, nothing but blue and gold above and below.

What could they do—cry? No, crying wouldn't save them. Dick held Mattie's hand very tightly. If the worst came, and the waves reached them and swept them away, he would not let her go from him. His love made him very strong and brave, but then he was only seven years old. No boat to be seen on the sea, nobody on shore, and the tide sweeping up, ay, washing over the rock, save the higher part, where the children cowered.

"Oh, Dick, 'tis same as you said," cried trembling Mattie.

"'Martha and Mary went down to the sea,
A big fish swallowed them, fiddle-de-dee!'

"Oh! Dick, what's that—is it the fish coming?"

"That" was a black something, striking out toward them through the sunlit waters, from the shore; nay, the head of the black something seemed crowned with gold.

"I do believe 'tis dear old Nep," cried Dick joyfully.

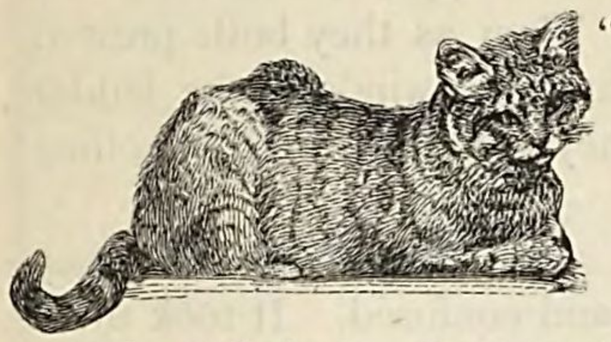
Yes, it was Nep, who, somehow, had found out they were in peril, and come to save them. Now he was on the rock by them.

"Her first," said Dick, patting Mattie with one hand, the dog with the other.

Ah! he understood, and seized her dress with his teeth, Dick telling her how to cling to the animal. Now they were in the water, now they were landing. Now Nep licked and patted the little girl, till she sat up. Now he was beating back to Dick: he was but just in time—the water was lifting the boy from his feet; yet he had uttered no cry to hasten the faithful dog, as he tarried a few brief moments to revive his wee mistress, ere he went to the rescue of his master.

Hurrah! they were safe on land at last, thanks to Nep, the greatest hero.

MR. WHIPPER-SNAPPER SNOOKS AND HIS FRIENDS.



"WHAT are you going to do with them?"

"Drown 'em!"

"But they are dear little things."

"Can't help it. If I could find anybody as wanted 'em, why of course I'd sell 'em; but nobody don't want 'em."

"I do; and I'll give you all the money I have in the world."

"How much?"

"Two shillings, and sixpence of Queenie's. Is that enough?"

"'Tain't enough, but it will do."

The bright half-a-crown, which had been admired so often and treasured up with so much care, was handed over; the two speakers, a man and a boy, shook hands on the bargain, and separated.

The man stood watching the boy as he walked down the road, and as he disappeared the man laughed loudly, tossed the half-crown into the air, caught it, and laughed again.

"Two-and-six for three kittens," he said, with a chuckle, "and I give nothing for 'em. Good again!"

And the boy—now that the kittens were safe, now that there was no fear of their being drowned in the dirty pond—the boy was beginning to wonder what Queenie would think when she heard that her money was spent, and what nurse would say when she saw his purchase.

"I wish mother were at home," he said, as he trudged along; "but the way will be to make nurse interested in them. She used to say my guinea-pigs were stupid, until she got to like them; and then I believe she really was sorry when they died."

He was so busy with his own thoughts that the road home seemed very short. Once indoors, the first thing to be done was to explain matters to his small sister, and, to his delight, he found that she was so pleased with the kittens that she did not care at all about the money being spent.

"What shall we call them, Roy? and what will nurse say?" said Queenie.

"I don't know," said Roy doubtfully.

"I know," said Queenie; and she whispered a few words in Roy's ear.

Roy smiled, and looked very pleased. Nurse was upstairs in the nursery, knitting.

"Nurse, may I bring Mr. Whipper-snapper Snooks in to see you?" said Queenie's voice outside the door.

"Will you allow me to introduce Lady Clementina Rogers to you?" said Roy's voice.

Nurse felt for her spectacles, and put up her hands to straighten her cap, wondering who the strange visitors could be.

"Mr. Augustus Dappers wants to see you badly," said Roy.

Then the door opened, nurse jumped up from her chair, and three small kittens, one white, one black, and one tabby, were placed on the nursery floor.

There was a sound of laughter outside, and two heads appeared round the door.

"Did you really expect to see fine ladies and gentlemen?" said Queenie.

"May we keep them?" asked Roy.

Nurse smiled; she was evidently quite won over, though she said doubtfully—

"You have so many animals—what will your mother say if she comes home and finds the place turned into a regular Zoological Gardens? Kittens are worse than puppies."

"Puppies!" said Roy with a start; "I quite forgot the puppies. I wonder if they will fight the kittens?"

"I expect they will," said nurse. "Perhaps you had better give the kittens back."

"But they were bought——" began Queenie.

Roy looked at her severely.

"We can teach them to be friendly with the kittens," he said. "We will ask Cobbs how it is to be done."

Cobbs was the gardener, and the children believed firmly that Cobbs knew everything about plants and animals.

The kittens were left in the stable, and the

children went in search of Cobbs. Unfortunately, Cobbs was busy, and though he found time to listen to the children's story, he seemed in a hurry to get back to his work.

"You won't make 'em friends if they don't want," he said; "all I can say is, leave 'em alone."

"Leave 'em alone," repeated Roy: "that will be easily done."

"Yes, indeed," said Queenie; "we will go and do it now"; and she ran back to the stable, followed by Roy.

They found the three kittens, tired out with their game, fast asleep in a tub full of hay.

"They do look pretty!" said Queenie.

"I do hope the puppies won't hurt them," said Roy.

"We can't tell what they will do until we try," said Queenie. "Let us put them together, and see what happens."

The two puppies were fetched and placed by the side of the barrel. They sniffed the hay and the tub, rubbed their heads against a piece of mistletoe which was hanging out of it, but refused to take any notice of the kittens, probably because they could not see them.

"Cobbs said we were to leave them alone," said Roy.

"Very well; let us go outside and look through the window," said Queenie.

The children ran outside, leaving the stable-door a little way open. They pulled a short ladder up to the window, climbed on to it, and peeped in.

The two puppies were sitting contentedly under the piece of mistletoe, the kittens were still asleep.

"Perhaps they are kissing one another," said Queenie.

"Oh, look!" cried Roy, "Mr. Whipper-snapper Snooks has woke up."

Mr. Whipper-snapper Snooks, the black kitten, had not only woke up, but he had discovered that there were two somethings outside the tub. Mr. Whipper-snapper stretched himself and roused his companions. Then he sat on the edge of the tub and stared at the puppies.

"He's seen them," said Roy.

"And they've seen him," said Queenie, as the two puppies turned round quickly and stared up at the kittens.

"I wonder what will happen?" said the two children together. Then as they both pressed forward to get nearer the window, the ladder slipped, fell, and they found themselves rolling on the ground.

They were not very much hurt, but they felt greatly shaken and confused. It took them a minute or two to pick themselves up from the ground, and remember where they were and what they had been doing.

"Kittens," said Roy at last.

"Puppies," said Queenie, pointing to the stable-door.

"Where are the kittens?" said Roy.

"In the stable, of course," said Queenie.

But the kittens were not in the stable. The tub was there, though nearly all the grass had been pulled out of it; but the kittens were nowhere to be seen.

"Gone!" said Roy.

"But where?" said Queenie.

"They must have eaten them," said Roy, looking at the two puppies, who were wagging their short tails vigorously.

"We'd better tell Cobbs," said Roy.

For the first time in their lives Cobbs failed them. He could not find the kittens, but he firmly declared that "he didn't see as how them puppies could have eaten them." He was very much puzzled—quite as much puzzled as the children were—over the strange disappearance of Mr. Whipper-snapper Snooks, Lady Clementina Rogers, and Mr. Augustus Dappers.

But that was not the end of it all.

Three days later, as the children were playing with the puppies, Cobbs came towards them with a basket.

"I've got a present for you here, Master Roy," he said, "from Farmer Dobson. I was telling him about your disappointment with them kittens, and he sent you these two. He says they are pretty kittens, but they are always running away, so you'll have to be careful."

Then Cobbs produced from the basket a white kitten and a black one.

Queenie took the white kitten in her arms,

UNEXPECTED VISITORS. (*See p* 168)

looked at it, and gave a cry of astonishment, just as Roy, who was looking at the black one, exclaimed—

"Mr. Whipper-snapper Snooks!"

Queenie nodded her head, and cried—

"Lady Clementina Rogers!"

Cobbs looked rather astonished, then all at once he rubbed his hands together, and said—

"Not them same kittens! Can't be!"

"They are," said Roy. "Has Farmer Dobson gone?"

Cobbs shook his head, and the children ran quickly to the back gate. The farmer was mounting his horse.

"Did you have three kittens?" asked Roy.

"Were they stolen, and did they come back again?" demanded Queenie.

The farmer looked as if he did not quite understand.

"I have another kitten at home," he said: "a tabby one. I didn't know they were stolen, though, now I come to think of it, my little girl did tell me some story about a man carrying them off; but I didn't trouble about it, for the kittens came back the same night."

"Then this is Mr. Whipper-snapper Snooks," said Roy. "They were stolen. I bought them of the man, and then they ran away."

"And this is Lady Clementina," said Queenie. "I am glad! Thank you so much; we will keep them out of the way of the puppies this time, and never mind about making them friendly."

"Thank you, thank you," said Roy. "Give our love to Mr. Augustus Dappers."

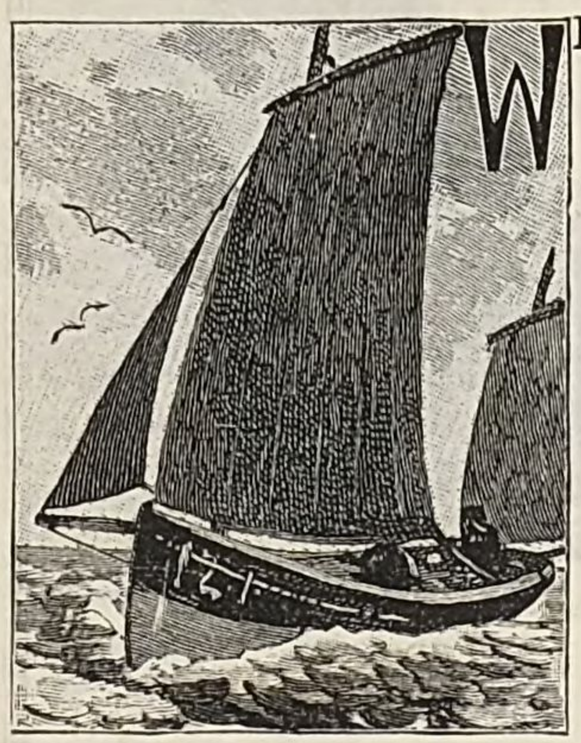
But the farmer stared, and as he rode away he could not help wondering what the children meant.

MAGGIE BROWNE.

TEE-TO-TUM TALES.

By LUCY FARMER, *Author of "The Little Folks' Peep Show," "The Chronicles of Cardewe Manor," &c.*

III.—THE FLOATING TOYS, AND THE TEE-TO-TUM ROCK.



WE found it difficult to understand why the cousins laughed so heartily until they explained that the sight of the old wizard in the pool of sea water was so funny that they could not help laughing. This made us laugh again as we thought of the old man; and the children soon got over their alarm.

Bobby was even bold enough to say that he would go back to the cave; but as the day was passing rapidly, we thought it better to go home then, and find something amusing for next day. We had some conversation with the old sailor that evening, and he suggested a trip to the sand-bank near which the toy ship had struck. The Tee-to-tum Rock lay between the harbour and the sands; so if we went with the sailor we could all see the place—one afternoon when the tide served.

The cousins declared that they would go with us, and the boatman, whose name was Price, was pleased to hear them say so, for he smiled and nodded at them.

"All right, young gentlemen, you come along; only don't go a-makin' it *too* warm, ye know, that's all!" said the sailor.

"Never fear, Price," replied Ernest; "it will be all right!"

I confess that neither I nor my young charges understood this "side-talk" as Bobby called it—but as the trip promised to be interesting, and the sunset apparently foretold fine weather for the expedition, we took matters as they arose, and did not trouble ourselves about the elder boys.

One morning they came, about ten o'clock, quite ready for the long excursion. They had already seen Price: he was quite satisfied with the weather and the wind; he had got his boat ready and only waited for us to start. This was good news; and you may be sure that we did

not delay any longer. Off we set, and soon found Mr. Price on the small pier. He was looking out for us, and as soon as ever he made us out, he hurried down to his boat, loosed the sails and made things tidy, so that when we reached the steps we had only to step on board, and pass along to our seats at the steering end.

"Jolly breeze," exclaimed Bobby. "I say, Mrs. Farmer, I hope you are not going to be ill!"

"Hold your tongue, Bobby," I replied. "Take care of yourself—you may not like the sea after a while!"

"Oh, won't I!" he cried. "It's only girls and women who get bad at sea. There's Annie quite green already—look!"

But Annie bravely declared that she was quite well enough to go out. Meanwhile, the boat had been skimming over the surface of the smooth water in the little harbour, and by the time that our conversation was over the skiff was pitching into and rushing through the waves outside. Flop! Flap! then a dash of spray and a rushing and hissing of foam alongside. The boat leaned over, and the cousins changed to the upper side. Then we dashed through the water, lifting and lapping, and splashing through the sparkling sea, from which the sun reflected a strong light which dazzled our eyes and burned our faces. Glorious! Splendid!

"There's the Tee-to-tum Rock!" cried Annie. "Look, Ethel! Look, Bobby!"

Bobby made no answer. His face was pale, and his eyes were heavy.

"Why, Bob," said his cousin; "*you* don't mind a bit of a 'lop' on the sea, surely! You're not a girl!"

"Leave me alone," replied the lad crossly. "I'd rather be quiet and ruminate."

We laughed at him as he ruminated, looking so unhappy in the process. The girls were quite well, and enjoyed the sailing.

"The sand is dry," said Price. "Perhaps the young gentleman would like to land while we go near to the rock."

"Yes, I think I would," murmured Bobby. "It's very rough out here, isn't it?"

"It will be smoother when the flood makes," said Price heartily. "Keep up your spirits, sir: we'll land you, and come for you again."

So the boat was steered to the great sand-bank which rose smooth and rounded from the sea. The waves roared round the margin, not loudly, but with sufficient noise to remind us of what they *could* do on a stormy night when the wind was north-east instead of south-west as then, and only blowing off shore; not all the way from the cold northern seas.

Price lowered the sail, and ran the boat upon the sand on the smooth side. Bobby was helped on shore, and sat down quietly to watch us. He soon got better then, for we could see him running about looking for shells and toys, which he expected to find.

The cousins seemed very much occupied with the management of the boat and with the lunch hampers. Price directed my attention and the children's to the curious Tee-to-tum Rock, which was thin at the base, and then after spreading out in the middle, tapered away to a pinnacle point, worn and cut by the waves. It stood on a kind of rocky platform, or reef of rocks, which extended for some distance around it, so if any vessel came within fifty yards of the rock, she would certainly strike and go to pieces, or drift on the sand-bank and become a wreck.

We, the children and myself, examined this curious rock—I wish I could show you a picture of it—all covered with shell-fish and sea-weed, surrounded by tiny rocks, and all of them by the waves which broke against the pillar, and on rough days leaped quite over the top of it. At high tide the lower portion was covered, and we could perceive how it had been hollowed out by the sea.

Very much interested, we continued to gaze at this peculiar reef.

"Yonder's where the vessel went to pieces," said Price, pointing to a jagged shelf of rock at a distance. The poor men were all drowned, and the toys smashed to *h*atoms!"

"What's *h*atoms, please?" asked Ethel quietly.

"Bits, missie," was the reply, as quietly.

"But if all the toys were smashed to bits, why did you say we might find some left here, or on the sands?" cried Annie.

"Well, so we *may*," said Ernest. "Let us look in the tangled sea-weed. I am sure Price wouldn't have thought of playing us a trick!"

"Sartinly! I shouldn't have thought of it," said Price firmly. "No, missie; I'd never go to deceive ye. If the toys *is* here—"

"Here is one, any way," shouted Tom. "Look, Mrs. Farmer. And what is that yonder?—there, isn't it a Noah's Ark? Fish it out, Price!"

Price laid in his sculls with which he had been pulling gently outside the rocks, and putting out a long pole with a hook to it, he dragged in a fine Noah's Ark, not much the worse for the sea; the paint was rubbed off a little, and the roof was damaged: but, considering the circumstances, in wonderfully good preservation.

"You are fortunate, Annie," said Arthur. "I hope we shall find something else."

After a while a toy dog was found pitched high up on the rock, and it was rescued with some difficulty. Ethel received it. It was also bruised, but dry. Then we found some dishes and plates of wood, some of the dishes with joints and fowls on them—but some swept clean. Two dolls completed the salvage there.

But just as we turned to find Bobby again, we heard him shouting. Something in the water had attracted his attention. Price pulled in the direction desired, and picked up a spade—of wood—and soon after a fine toy railway engine, with its tender, floating helplessly on the sea. Some smaller toys, and several animals from the Ark, were picked up afterwards, while Ernest had the satisfaction of rescuing Shem and his wife from a watery grave.

"Now for lunch—or early dinner shall we call it," I said. "Let us lay the cloth here on the sands and eat our provisions while the toys dry."

It was great fun to watch the children running about unpacking and arranging the things on the newspapers which represented a cloth. A few inquisitive gulls came flying above us, crying plaintively for something to eat. Every now and then the children would rush away to hunt for some more toys, and so dinner was delayed. But at length we all sat down, and enjoyed our meal very much, though the sun was very hot overhead.

When Price had had his share, we tossed the fragments of our meal upon the water for the gulls, which came swooping gracefully to pick up the morsels. The wind and sea had become more gentle by this time, the tide had begun to flow again, and the sand was getting more and more covered.

"Now, ma'am, and young gentlemen, and ladies," said Price; "time's up. We'll be drowned if we stays here much longer—we've got to tack home, so I must sort ye about, mind. Gently, sir: in with you."

Bobby leaped in, and we all followed. In an hour and a half we gained the harbour, and landed safely after a delightful trip. Bobby was better, and all were pleased with the toys.

"The only thing that puzzles me," said Annie, "is the new appearance of the toys: they do not seem battered much, and very little paint is off."

"That only proves what splendidly made toys they must be," replied Tom seriously. "It must be very satisfactory to have good ones, eh, Mrs. Farmer?"

"Yes," I replied. "But I am also wondering how long it is since the vessel was wrecked: I think Price must be mistaken."

"Never mind!" exclaimed Bobby. "We've got the things now, and that is the great point. What's the good in spec'lating on it at all?"

Bobby was right. There was no use in speculating. So we talked of something else as we went home together.

NODDING POPLARS.

"POPLARS nodding in the breeze,
Pretty, graceful poplar trees:
Tell me why you bend and sway,
Making curtseys all the day?
Tell me, are you so polite
As to curtsey all the night?
Are you—poplars clad in green—
Maids of honour to a queen?"

"Listen, darling, this is why:
When the wind goes rushing by
On his buoyant outspread wings,
Oft he chants of wondrous things—
Songs of sea and songs of land,
Tales that poplars understand;
Then we bend our heads to hear
All his secrets, little dear!"

ELLA AND THE MAGIC LANTERN.

A STORY IN SIMPLE WORDS.

"I KNOW just how father did it," said Ella; "he lighted the little lamp and then he put the pictures on the glass through. The glass pictures are in the box on father's study table. Go and bring them here, Susan."

"ELLA . . . . LIGHTED THE WICK."

So Susan went off, and Ella, taking a match from Annie, who was playing with a box on the floor, lighted the wick in the little lamp. And to her great joy she saw a round patch of light on the opposite wall.

"That is where the pictures will be," she said to Annie, "the camel and the monkeys, and the boys with hoops, and the ship at sea. What a time Susan is!

And at that moment not only Susan but their father came into the room. And Susan had not got the box. When he saw Ella with the lantern lamp lighted he said, "Why, child, what are you doing—the oil is over everything. You should not have touched the lantern."

Ella saw that she had daubed the lantern with oil, also her fingers and white pinafore.

"Oh dear," she said, "you did not make yourself dirty with it last night, father."

"No, because I knew how to manage it. Now I must take it away to be cleaned, and you must not meddle with it again."

Ella looked rather ashamed, and Susan and Annie said—"Ah, we shall not see the pictures again." But their father said, "Yes you shall. Perhaps if you are all very good till tea-time I will bring the lantern into the nursery, and you shall see the pictures, and also some more that I bought this morning."

G.

STORIES OF THE UNEXPECTED

III.—A MUDDY WALK AND A USEFUL FIRE.

WE were all very anxious to know what Uncle George expected us to find on the ground. Some suggested gold or silver mines, others spoke of coal, and Aunt Mary hinted at the successful merchant who owed his rise in life to stopping to pick up a pin, as he left an office where his offer to go to work had been declined without thanks.

"That reminds me of the tale of the gentleman who was going to engage a servant, and put a broom down on the floor. Some stepped over it, some walked round it, and only one man picked it up; of course, he got the place. There's the gong," said father; "now keep your eyes on the ground."

Of course, nobody did that, for the curtain rose, and every one of us, including father, looked up at uncle. He was dressed in a rather shabby suit, he had a hat on, and the stage was covered with some dark felt, like that which is put down under our drawing-room carpet. If we were not looking down he certainly was.

"Well, you do look miserable!" remarked Cousin Jack.

"So would you, young man," was the reply, in fearfully gloomy tones, "if you were a railway clerk at a little station in the north, and had not enough money to live upon. Time was when I could hold up my head as well as any man, but now I have debts and money worries, and I feel downhearted."

"Poor fellow!" said Minnie, with tears in her voice, if not in her eyes—she was so tender-hearted—but she had hardly said the words when uncle's whole manner changed. With one foot in the air, he stooped yet lower and stared at the ground; then he stamped his foot heavily, raised it, and stared again; then threw his arms up and exclaimed, "Hurrah, I shall be a rich man!"

"What has he found?" we cried, standing up in our eagerness to see the floor.

"Simply the impression of my rather big and heavy boot," said uncle, turning the sole of one of them towards us. "I've mystified you all, I see, so I'll come and take a seat by the fire and tell you all about it. You will please to imagine that the stage is a field and the felt is muddy earth. One day in the summer of 1840 a railway clerk named Edmondson was walking home over the field which he had crossed hundreds of times before. He was miserable enough, as I told you, when suddenly he caught sight of the marks which his foot had made on the ground. Instantly it struck him that a railway ticket could be made of pasteboard, and stamped very much after that fashion."

"What had the people been using before?" I asked.

"If you had wanted to travel by train before Edmondson had his wonderful thought, you would have had a printed form given to you at the ticket office, and you would have had to wait while the clerk filled it in with pen and ink, telling the date and the place you wanted to go to."

"Fancy that on a Bank Holiday!" remarked Charlie.

"Bank Holidays didn't exist then, but still the time wasted was of serious consequence to many people, besides giving so much more work to the railway officials. It flashed across Edmondson's mind in a minute that tickets could be printed with names of stations, and class of carriage, from one end to the other of the kingdom. His idea was carried out, and it is used now on all the railways in the world. Of course it was largely developed, but the ticket-printing and checking machines, and the dating press owe their origin to the marks that Edmondson's boots made on that Northumberland field. The Great Western Railway alone prints about forty million tickets every year."

Uncle George was going to get up, but Jack and Charlie jumped on the arm of his big chair.

"Don't move, uncle, it isn't bed-time yet; can't you think of another tale to tell us? We

will do a tableau for you to-morrow; I've thought of it already."

Uncle made a wry face as if he would rather not have another of our exhibitions, but we were used to his joking, and only bothered him all the more for a tale.

"Who knows what gum is made of?" said uncle suddenly.

"Gum arabic, of course," replied I promptly; "but that isn't a fairy tale; we all know everything about gum arabic, for it is one of our object lessons."

"Dear me, how learned we are; but I don't want gum arabic just now. I want the gum which is put on the postage stamps; that doesn't come from Asia, Africa, or America, but is made in England, and perhaps you will be rather surprised to hear that the way to make that gum was discovered quite by accident.

"King George the Fourth had been travelling through Ireland; everyone was delighted to see him, and he had quite a triumphal procession wherever he went. But he had to come back to England in time, and on the fifth of September, 1821, he embarked at the harbour of Dunleary. Who knows where Dunleary is? Now, Miss Encyclopedia, why don't you answer?"

"Because I don't know, Uncle George," I replied.

Everyone else seemed as ignorant as myself, so after raising his hands in mock amazement at our stupidity, uncle went on—

"Well, I suppose I must forgive you. Dunleary is not Dunleary now, for the loyal Irish changed its name to Kingstown in honour of His Majesty. Of course all the citizens of Dublin and the neighbourhood went to see the king off, and then they determined to spend the rest of the day in merry-making. Towards evening, when there was a good deal of noise and riot, there was a sudden cry of 'Fire,' and the people rushed into the streets to find out where it was. A starch factory which stood on the banks of the Liffey in the little village of Chapelizod, near Dublin, was in flames. You can imagine how the people rushed to the rescue, and helped to pump the water on the burning factory. The starch was washed into the roads, and they were often ankle deep in it."

"How sticky it must have been!" said Minnie, whose experience in washing and ironing dolls' clothes gave her an advantage over the boys.

"You are right. It was bad enough for the people who only walked in it, but there were four or five men employed as calico printers who had several tumbles. One of them particularly, when he wanted to dress himself in the morning, found his garments all stuck together as if they had been glued.

"When he was dressed, he told his companions at the shop, and found that they had the same difficulty about getting into their clothes. This made them think there was a mystery somewhere. They walked to the ruins of the starch factory, and found that the roads were covered with sticky puddles. Then it struck them that this sticky stuff would do instead of the expensive gum arabic which was used in calico printing. They took some away and tried it, found it was all that they wanted, so they set to work to make some more."

"Not by burning another factory, I hope," said father, "like the people who first tasted roast pig? They found it so good, according to Charles Lamb, that they kept setting fire to their houses to get some more."

"No, they took some common starch, burned it in a frying pan, and put some water to it. So, thanks to that fire, they found out how to make British gum, which is as good as the other kind, and costs ever so much less."

"Didn't they make a lot of money?" said Charlie.

"You can take a horse to the water, my lad, but you can't make him drink. You can give boys and girls and men and women the chance of making money and getting on in the world, but if they will live badly and spend every penny, they will always be poor. These men made money, but they spent it all, and were at last only too glad to sell their secret to someone else, and go off to New Orleans, where they soon ran through the money they had, and were never heard of again."

"What a pity!" said Minnie. "The next time I put a stamp on a letter, I believe I shall think of that man staring at his clothes, all stuck together."

E. M. Waterworth.

The Si-Wang-Che at the North Pole
See Vol XXIX p. 392
& Vol XXXI p. 312
Guide to the North Pole
The Mermaids say
that the Si-Wang-Che
Floated again on the Yellow Sea:
With an Umbrella sail
And a Sou'west gale
They sailed away
All taut and gay,
Out on a Voyage of Discoverie
Ha Ha! they cry He! He!

C
FP
A.R.M.
They found the Pole
in the Icy Sea:
Perched on the top
was an old Chinee
We'll capture a bear
And that old man there
"Out in the Cold"
Said the Bo'sun bold
And start a show
in the Yellow Sea
Ha Ha! they laugh He! He!
YE ONLY GENUINE NORTH POLE
CAUTION
REFUSE ALL IMITATIONS
VISITORS ARE REQUESTED NOT TO TOUCH
KIN-HWA.

TO YELLOW SEA
TO ANYWHERE
FRAGILE
WITH CARE
The Umbrella sail set
-Yo! Ho! with glee,
They towed the pole
and the old Chinee
But the prize so nice
Was naught but ice,
And day by day
Melted away
Till nothing was left
at the Yellow Sea.
Ho! Ho! said they
He! He!

THE MAGICIAN AND THE VICTIM.

IT was growing dark, and the old garden was very still and quiet as three mysterious figures in long cloaks crept slowly down the walk. "Abracadabra! He! Ho! Hum!" said the first figure in a firm voice.

"Higgledy Piggledy! Te! To! Tum!" repeated the second.

But the third, the smallest of the three, said nothing. The third figure was beginning to feel nervous and unhappy.

"Once more," cried the first figure boldly, "once more, even at the door of his den,—then we may defy his power!"

There was a faint scream from the third figure.

"Look there," she said, pointing to one of the windows in the house next door. A white face was peering into the darkness!

"The Victim!" cried the first figure.

"The Victim!" repeated the second.

The third dropped her long cloak, and ran indoors as fast as her legs could carry her. The others followed her slowly, but quickened their steps as they neared the house, for someone was calling them. It was nurse.

"Now, Master Eric and Miss Edith," said she, "what have you been doing? Here's Miss Jeanie come in all of a tremble."

"Jeanie's such a goosie," said Eric.

"I'm all right now, nurse," said Jeanie. "Eric and Edith were only pretending that the old gentleman next door was a magician, and that we had to say a charm to keep him from enchanting us."

"It was jolly, nurse," said Edith; "it made me feel creepy right down my back."

"I don't like feeling 'creepy,'" said Jeanie.

"No, indeed," said nurse, "you shouldn't play such games; and you must remember that now that the house next door is let, you must not climb over the wall every five minutes to fetch balls."

"Are there any children?" asked Eric.

"No, only an old gentleman and a sick lady."

"The Magician and the Victim," whispered Edith to Eric, as they went upstairs to bed.

* * * * *

It was beautifully fine the next morning, and the children were out in the garden playing at ball soon after breakfast. The game was at its height when Jeanie, in the excitement of the moment, hit the ball too hard. It bounced on the wall, and tumbled into the next door garden.

"You will have to fetch it," said Eric.

"Nurse said—" began Jeanie.

"Oh, she didn't mean we were never to go over," said Edith.

"I saw the old gentleman out in the garden this morning," said Eric; "he was carrying some things into the little house nurse calls the studio. He does look queer!"

"He isn't there now," said Edith, "and we must have the ball. Over you go, Jeanie!"

The ball was nowhere to be seen. The door of the studio was half open, and Jeanie fancied she saw something very like a ball lying inside on the floor. She looked up at the house to see if anyone were watching, and then ran quickly up the steps. Once inside, she forgot all about the ball. The room, which a few days before had been full of cobwebs and dirt, looked bright and pretty. There were pictures everywhere, and Jeanie, who was very fond of pictures, stopped in front of one of them, lost in admiration. It was a picture of a lady, and as Jeanie looked at it she thought she had never before seen any face so beautiful. Eric and Edith called, but she did not hear them: someone came up the studio steps, but Jeanie was in Dreamland; and it was only when the someone said in a gruff voice, "Dear me! how very peculiar!" that Jeanie turned away from the picture, and saw, to her horror, that the old gentleman was standing looking at her.

He looked so queer, and Jeanie was so startled that she quite lost her wits. She could hear a voice—it was Eric's—calling, "The Magician!" and all her fear of the night before returned.

She fell down on her knees, clasped her hands, and said quickly—"Abracadabra! He! Ho! Hum! Higgledy Piggledy! Te! To! Tum!" The old gentleman seemed very much alarmed. He rubbed his long white hair backwards and forwards until it stood up nearly

straight, and his face became redder and redder. Then, murmuring something about "mad," he walked out of the studio, slammed the door, and turned the key.

Jeanie jumped up from the ground quickly. She ran to the door and shook it, then ran to the window, calling, "Eric! Edith!"

To her great delight there was an answering shout, and two figures appeared on the top of the wall.

"He's locked me in," said Jeanie; "fetch mother. Do not come over, or he'll get you too. The charm was no good."

"Locked in!" cried Eric, and he nearly toppled off the wall in his astonishment.

But Edith was in the garden and up the steps of the studio.

"It is all right," she cried; "the key is in the door!"

"Oh, do be quick!" shouted Eric; "the Magician and the Victim are coming."

"JEANIE LOOKED AT IT" (*p.* 179).

The queer old gentleman and a tall lady were coming down the garden.

Edith was safe on the top of the wall, and she and Eric were trying to pull Jeanie up.

The old gentleman looked more astonished than ever, but the lady, who was not so very old, though she looked ill and worn, began to laugh.

"The children from next door," cried the lady, and she laughed again.

"Dear me! How very peculiar!" said the old gentleman, staring at the children.

Edith was the first to recover her senses.

"I'm very sorry," she said. "I'm afraid we ought not to be here; but you see, Jeanie came for the ball, and she is so silly that she thought you really were a magician."

"I told you so, my dear," said the old gentleman: "they are mad, all mad!" The lady laughed again, and put her finger on his lips.

"It was only a game," said Edith, looking at the lady, "and I am afraid it was rather rude. We pretended that the old gentleman was a Magician, and you were the Victim."

The lady laughed merrily.

"He is not a Magician, and I am not a Victim," she said; "he is only a dear old man, who is very, very kind to his sick daughter."

The children looked at one another sadly. Then, to everyone's astonishment, shy Jeanie stepped forward, and held out her hand to the old gentleman—

"We are very sorry," she said; "we didn't mean to be rude. Won't you forgive us?"

The old gentleman took the small hand in his, stooped down, and kissed the little girl's forehead.

There were tears in the lady's eyes, but she smiled bravely, and tried to laugh as she said, "Run and ask your mother if you may all three come to tea. I will show you my pictures."

"Yes," said the old gentleman, "say that the Magician and the Victim request the pleasure of your company."

The children laughed. "We will come if mother will let us," said Edith.

"And we won't call you that again," said Eric.

"The charm was *some* good, after all," said Jeanie, as the three children disappeared over the wall.

OUR SUNDAY AFTERNOONS.

MY JEWEL CASKET, AND SOME OF ITS WONDERFUL CONTENTS.

By MAGGIE SYMINGTON, *Author of "From Seed to Blossom," "The King's Command," etc.*

IX.—PURE AMETHYSTS.

THERE is one jewel in my casket to which I want you to give your very earnest attention to-day. We must look into the casket to find this stone, for, do you know, it must be there from the first, covered up and hidden, perhaps, but still there. It cannot be put into the casket from outside, though I hardly know how I shall make you understand this.

It is because of this jewel being in the casket that we are led at last to turn out all the rubbish we have been keeping there. How it came there I cannot tell you. I know that at one time the casket *seemed* to have nothing but rubbish in it, and then the next time the lid was raised I saw a faint light of pale violet shining through the rubbish, making it look so tawdry and common that there could be no comfort until the casket had been emptied of all the things one had been foolish enough to keep there.

Unless you have seen and recognised it, you can form no idea of the wonderful beauty of the jewel which then became visible. It glowed with the violet hue of the sky at evening, when the silver stars are set in its pale depths.

Would you like to know the name of this jewel? I call it a pure amethyst, but in the Bible it is spoken of as—Faith.

It is the first jewel that shines from the inner depths of the casket, but when once it appears, others are sure to follow. As this is so, do you not think we ought to be very careful to let it appear? You have the power your own little selves to increase or deaden its light.

I must ask your patience for a few minutes, while I try to tell you something of the nature of faith. This virtue exists in little children very largely sometimes: it belongs to them more naturally than to older people, who often have to take much trouble to acquire it. This lovely jewel of faith is the heavenly inheritance of the children, the riches they bring with them into this world. What each has to do is to take care not to lose it. For this reason they ought to be taught its value, and told its uses. If they only knew these things, I am sure they would try to take care of it.

Looking into the casket which has been given them, they might not be able to see this jewel at first, and so doubts would arise in their minds as to whether it really was there or not. There is one very sure way of telling whether the jewel is there, and I should like to tell you what this way is.

There is a beautiful story which sets this way very clearly before us. If you will give me your attention, I will tell you this story from our point of view, as simply as I can.

A boy named Victor Ellinborough was hastening home from school one day, when he heard the bleating of a little lost lamb. He was a tender-hearted boy, and the feeble cry touched the heart in his bosom and awoke a feeling of pity there. He forgot the haste he was in to reach home, and turned aside to look for the little lamb. He had to listen for its cry, and follow the sound.

It did not take him long to reach the place whence the cry came. He found the little lamb in a corner of the field, bleating over the dead body of its mother. It was a sight to move a much harder heart than Victor's. The poor little animal had evidently no idea what caused its mother to lie so still: there was no longer any warmth in her fleece, and no protection for the lamb under her woolly covering. There she lay, stiff and cold, her ears deaf to its piteous cry. The lamb sought comfort from her, and found none, and it could not understand the unresponsiveness of its mother, nor why her love should fail.

Victor took the little creature into his strong young arms. It was one of his father's lambs;

he knew the old ewe by the mark on her back. He was on his way home to the farm when the cry of the lamb had reached his ears. He could do nothing for the dead sheep, but the living lamb should go home with him. Would it follow him? he wondered. He tried to entice it with hand and voice. Strange to tell, it seemed to have no fear, no hesitation, no regret, even; it followed him at once without one backward glance. The lad's kind voice, his gentle touch, his winning look, awoke an instant response in the breast of the little lamb, and it trotted after him trustfully all the way home.

I wonder whether the text I want to bring to your minds will come to them here—"My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me." The little story I have been telling you is a very simple illustration of this text.

It is by faith we hear Christ's voice; we cannot hear it at all without faith, and the proof that we do hear it is—obedience. We trust Him, and follow Him, just as that little lamb trusted and followed the boy who bade it do so.

I want you particularly to notice this—faith and trust go together; there can be no faith without trust, and no trust unless faith is behind it. It may be only a very poor faith and a very poor trust, but the two will be found together, and equal in degree.

Faith, in the highest and holiest sense, is a jewel beyond price, and therefore a jewel to be most carefully guarded and desired. Faith is just that faculty of spiritual sight I spoke to you about two months ago, and the highest and holiest faith is ours only when our spiritual eyes are fixed firmly on Jesus Christ, and we see only through Him.

Like the little lamb, we are almost certain to follow those in whom we believe and can trust, so we need to be careful to believe and trust only such people as are true and good. Faith will help us to do great and glorious things, if it is a right faith; but a wrong faith will lead us into ever so many difficulties. There is right faith and wrong faith, you see, and sometimes it is very hard to tell one from the other. There are real jewels and sham jewels, too; the sham ones often deceive people who are not instructed where to look for the differences in them. In the eyes of ignorant people bits of purple glass might pass for real amethysts, but they would not deceive a dealer in precious stones: he would know at once which were the true jewels, and which the false ones. You may detect right faith just as easily if you know how to set about it.

Children dear, the best way of all to tell good faith from bad faith is to take the Bible's teaching for your enlightenment. If you do this, you cannot be mistaken, for the faith it tells you to have is the right faith—the pure amethyst. And knowing the right faith will help you to find out the worthlessness of the other, just as the jeweller who is familiar with real amethysts cannot be deceived by imitation ones.

And what is the teaching of the Bible about faith? I can give it you in a very few simple words, such as the least among you can readily understand: "Fear not; only believe." Believe what? That Jesus Christ was the Son of Almighty God: this is the purest faith of all. Believe in Him, trust Him, follow Him, and the key of all knowledge is in your hand.

I have read a lovely story—you may have read it too—about a lad who found this key where it was supposed to have been hidden, under the spot where the rainbow touches the earth. He had the key in his hand before he remembered that for every key there must be a key-hole somewhere. Where was the key-hole which this key fitted? The key was in itself a thing of beauty, being of pure gold set with jewels; still, a key without a key-hole was the strangest thing he ever heard of. He felt sure there must be a key-hole which it would fit in existence somewhere, and he hunted about to find it, but to no purpose. At last he made up his mind to set out in search of the hole for which this key was made. I cannot tell you of all he had to go through before he did find it: that belongs to the story which I have not time to relate here. There is one other little bit of it, however, which I must just pick out as bearing upon our chat this afternoon.

When Mossy, for that was the boy's name, reached a certain hut in the wood where lived the strangest old lady you ever heard of, he found a little girl there waiting to take the very same journey that he was bent upon taking. Her name was Tangle. When the old lady told

Tangle she had better go with Mossy, the little girl drew back. Attend closely to the old lady's reply—

"I should like you to go with him," she said, "*for he has the golden key.* No girl need be afraid to go with a youth who has the golden key.

It you are wise little people—wise according to the Bible's teaching—you will trust no one in whose hand is not this golden key. How are you to know whether the key is in their hand, or not? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will show you whether it is there.

HARVEST-TIDE CAROL.

NOW the corn hath fallen,
  Ripe and brown and gold,
And the sheaves are reapéd
  O'er the autumn wold.
Young and old, sing praises!
  Gathered from the plain,
Earth has twined rich garlands—
  Plenty smiles again.

From the tiny seedling
  Harvest riches rise,
Beauty woke around us
  'Neath the summer skies.
Rain and air and sunshine,
  Dews and tender heat,
And the kiss of autumn
  Filled the golden wheat!

Children, join your voices!
  All good things are given,
Through the changing seasons,
  By the love of Heaven.
Oh, sing praise together!
  Tell that God is good:
'Tis our Father's mercy
  Gives our daily food.

See in yonder forest
  Tree-tops seem to burn!
Glory shines around us
  Wheresoe'er we turn;
Hill and glen and valley
  Smile on every side:
Children, sing thanksgiving
  At the harvest-tide!

M. S. HAYCRAFT.

BIBLE EXERCISES.

25. Where does Solomon tell us that a good name is better than precious ointment?

26. Where are the beautiful feathers of the peacock alluded to in the Bible?

27. What king of Israel had peacocks brought from abroad into his own country?

28. What prophet, after prophesying against Jerusalem, fled, from fear, to Egypt, but was brought back and slain, whilst Jeremiah, who would not flee, was saved?

29. Where is soap mentioned in the Bible?

30 Where, in the Psalms, are those that love the Lord taught to hate evil?

31. Where is it said that the man that, instead of helping the poor, tries not to see their need, shall have many a curse?

32. Where is it said that God will make His people drink of the river of His pleasures?

33. Where does God call the Land of Israel "My Land"?

34. Where does the prophet Isaiah tell us that the salvation of God shall be for ever?

35. What bird is spoken of as sitting on its eggs, but not hatching them?

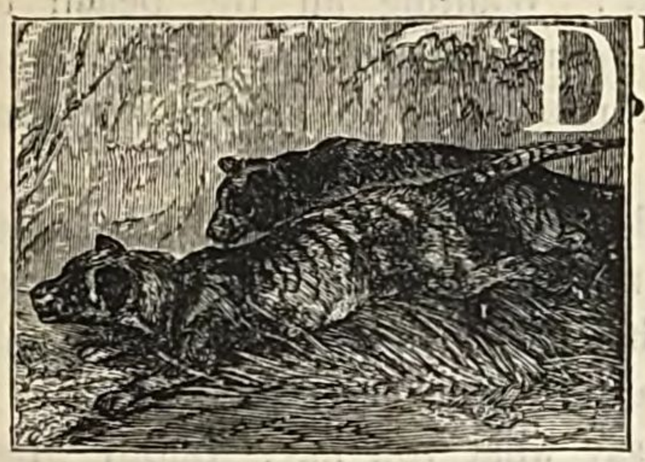
36. Where in the New Testament do we read of a man carrying a pitcher of water?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE EXERCISES—13—24. (*See p.* 103.)

13. Julius (Acts xxvii. 1, 3). 14. In Lam. iv. 3; Job xxxix. 13—16. 15. In Ps. cxix. 2. 16. Isaiah and Habakkuk (Is. xi. 9; Hab. ii. 14). 17. 130 years (Gen. xlvii. 9). 18. In Ps. xxxii. 8. 19. In Prov. xxx. 32. 20. Balaam (Numb. xxiii. 22). 21. In Mal. iii. 6. 22. In Job. xxviii. 12—19. 23. In Heb. xii. 1. 24. By Malachi (Mal. ii. 9).

A NIGHT SURPRISE. (*See p.* 187.)

THOSE TIRESOME TURKEYS!



"DEAR me!" said the Dormouse Phalanger to the Rat Kangaroo, as it hung by its tail and its fore-paws to the branch of a tree; "there are those tiresome turkeys coming again! We shall have no peace now!"

The scene was in a deep bay on the Tasmanian coast. Ages ago there had been a volcano smoking away on the mountain now called Klabat, and in those days, probably, a stream of burning lava had run down from it to the sea. Long since the lava had cooled down, leaving only a mile-long patch of deep, loose, black, volcanic sand, very coarse, while on either side of it stretched a beach of smooth white sand. Behind this black beach lay a stunted forest, rising away up to the mountains, and there it was that the Dormouse Phalanger hung.

"You don't say so!" replied Mrs. Rat Kangaroo, speaking from her grass nest below, in a hollow of the ground, where she was taking a noonday nap.

"Don't mean to say what?" inquired her husband, coming up at that moment, carrying a tuft of grass in his tail for the nest.

"Why, the turkeys are coming down again to lay their eggs!" replied the dormouse, cracking a nut, and letting the shell fall down the mouth of the burrow of a wombat who lived beneath the tree.

"My dear, don't worry yourself about them," replied Mr. Rat Kangaroo. "They are here to-day and gone to-morrow, and off before you know they're there! Be quiet and go to sleep, do!" and he thoughtfully stuffed up the entrance of the nest with the fresh grass he had brought, and went to sleep himself inside, too.

But the wombat, aroused by the dropping of the nutshell, emerged from his burrow—a funny little beast, like a tiny bear, or a small badger.

"Well, what's all the noise about?" he grunted. "Why don't you let a fellow go to sleep who has been up all night?"

"Oh! don't talk about noise," cried the Phalanger Dormouse. "Wait till the turkeys have all come."

"Oh! only the turkeys! I'm used to them. They don't disturb me, for they are roosting when I'm about," grunted the wombat, and retired again into his hole.

It was high noon, and the sun shone down very hot over the dark beach and the forest. Most of the New World animals that would seem so queer to us, could we see them, were asleep. In the dark forest—dark because all the trees and shrubs were evergreen—the birds were silent, the laughing jackass with its odd note, the whistling magpie, the shrieking green parrots and cockatoos. Only, down on the beach, the turkeys were scratching and gobbling.

The Dormouse Phalanger, swinging on his branch, with his keen little eyes watched Mr. and Mrs. Maleo (that is the name of the brush turkeys) descend in a stately way to the beach. They presented a very different appearance from the birds of the same name which we associate with our English farm-yards and with Christmas-time. Their black and rosy-white plumage shone in the sun. Bravely and haughtily they carried their red helmeted heads and their upstanding tails.

Mr. and Mrs. Maleo had come a long journey, some ten or fifteen miles, to lay their egg. Mrs. Maleo only laid very few eggs in the year, and each time she did so she came all this way, because the black sand on the beach was hot and loose, and formed a suitable place to deposit her egg.

A large crowd of turkeys was collected, all bent on the same errand. There were Mr. and Mrs. Gobbler, an old pair, who had made many journeys to the same spot year after year; and everyone was talking and scratching, and, I am afraid I must say, fighting, as hard as they could.

"I'm making a hole here! You get away to another place!" cried Mrs. Gobbler to Mrs. Maleo as she began scratching.

"I was here first. *You* go away!" retorted Mrs. Maleo haughtily.

"Don't send such a shower of sand into my face," put in a third.

"Dear me! what a commotion!" screeched a great grey cockatoo, wagging his yellow crest, to the dormouse, for he had his nest in the same tree, in a rotten hole.

"I don't think you'd better talk about noise!" remarked the dormouse airily. "Why, I'd sooner have a dozen turkeys gobbling about than a dozen of you in *my* tree!"

"Why can't they each make a nest to themselves, like other birds," the cockatoo went on. "I call it very lazy, laying all your eggs together like that, anyhow."

"And then they are such bad parents. Fancy not looking after your eggs any more than they do! Why, they leave the young birds entirely to themselves, and never come near their eggs again, once they are laid!"

"Ugh!" said the cockatoo, who disliked the annual visitors as much as any of the inhabitants of the forest. "But I must say the young ones are able to take care of themselves very well. They can fly directly they are hatched, and precious soon find out where the fruit is."

"But what is worse (though I own I do feel with you about the fruit: they do range so far and wide for it, and leave so little for other people) is what comes after them. First, those horrid men, that I'm so afraid of (often with dogs with them), come down and grub in the sands to find the eggs. And then the striped wolves—they are dreadful! They come down here after them from the mountains, and make my life unbearable."

"You should fly up out of their reach," screeched the cockatoo.

"Or get underground, away from them!" grunted the wombat, who had woke up again.

"Fancy being afraid of a striped wolf!" laughed the cockatoo, as he flew off to another tree to watch the turkeys.

The squabbling was still going on.

"I've come down to lay on this beach for several seasons before you were hatched," old Mrs. Gobbler was saying sternly to Mrs. Maleo; "and more arrogant young birds than you two I've never met! Wanting all the beach to yourselves, for your one egg! I never!" and she craned her neck, and gobbled at her contemptuously.

"And so rude, too!" put in Mrs. Redcasque, rather a timid turkey. "I declare my eyes are quite full of the sand you've scratched in my face. Such manners we're not used to here!"

"You may say what you like," quoth Mrs. Maleo angrily; "*I* don't care. I've come miles and miles to lay my egg, and I'm going to have my own way about it."

"Impudent thing!" gobbled Mr. Gobbler. "I only hope the natives will come and dig up your egg and eat it!"

"Well, it is a *very* nice one," said Mrs. Maleo, surveying it complacently. "Four inches long, I should think, and *such* a pretty pale red colour!"

"Conceited thing!" cried another turkey; "one can see she's never laid an egg before. I hope the natives will eat it, and the wolves eat you; and serve you right too!"

"Oh, please don't talk about the wolves!" put in Mrs. Redcasque nervously. "You do frighten me so!"

"And now, my dear, as we have quite finished our little business," interrupted Mr. Maleo, "I think we'd best be getting back to the forest. I feel hungry, and there is evidently no food to be got in the woods about here. The dormice and the cockatoos seem to gobble up every berry there is!"

So the pair set off at a quick run into the forest. It was growing dusk by now, for their egg-laying operation, and the commotion there had been over it, had taken them all the afternoon. The other turkeys also dispersed in various directions, and the cockatoo chuckled with delight as he watched them depart.

"That's a good riddance," the dormouse cried to him, as she leapt lightly to the ground. "But, oh dear!" she cried, retreating as quickly to her branch for safety; "whatever's that?"

For other eyes had also watched the turkeys depart. Some of them belonged to a group of dusky natives, who, the moment the coast was

clear, hurried down to the beach, and, with much alacrity, began grubbing up the turkeys' eggs as fast as they could find them. From fifty miles round the Tasmanian natives will come to get these delicacies; for delicious they are. They did not wait to boil them or to poach them. They just cracked them and ate them, and they were so big that one formed a nice meal. They did enjoy them!

In the meantime, while Mr. and Mrs. Maleo, all unconscious of the fate of their egg, and still jubilant and conceited, were running through the forest, other eyes watched them too.

About sunset, two of the kind of wolves called striped wolves, or tiger-wolves, had sallied forth from their den in a gloomy glen beneath Mount Klabat. They were about the size of the European wolf, and grey in colour, but marked across the back with broad black stripes like a tiger. They carried long slender tails nearly as long as their bodies, and their heads were not unlike those of the dog. They were, however, anything but like a good faithful dog in their behaviour. Stealthily they slunk through the forest in the darkness, scaring everything that heard their cautious footfall. The prowling wombat hurried into the nearest burrow, and the kangaroos gathered their little ones into their pouches, and bounded off with giant leaps at their approach. They were very hungry, and not a sound or sight escaped these midnight marauders. On they crept through the dark underwood, and even the wild cat flew before them.

Suddenly, on the low branch of a tree within easy reach of the ground, they came upon Mr. and Mrs. Maleo, fast asleep, and snoring (if turkeys snore). Mrs. Maleo was doubtless dreaming of her pretty red-brick egg, and of the clever way in which she had held her own against old Mrs. Gobbler; and Mr. Maleo was dreaming of wild raspberries, when—the tiger-wolves perceived that they had come upon their supper.

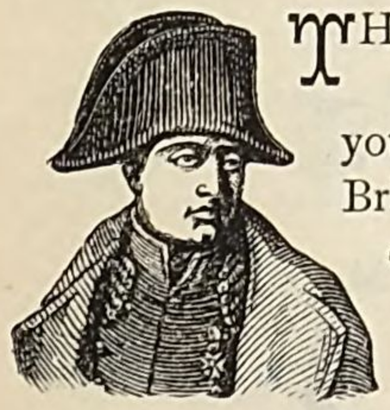
What followed you see portrayed in the picture. The tiger-wolves did *not* return to their cave hungry.

Next morning the Phalanger Dormouse, swinging and climbing through the forest, came upon a little heap of rose white and black feathers. He told the cockatoo, and the cockatoo told the wombat, and the wombat came out of his hole to call on the kangaroo rats in their grass nest, and to tell them the news. The kangaroo rats shuddered.

Next time the turkeys went down to the black beach to lay their eggs, Mr. and Mrs. Maleo did not come. There was much wondering over their absence, and many questions were asked. But, as is always the case when people are unpopular from being unpleasant and selfish to others, no one regretted their absence.

EDITH E. CUTHELL.

HOW NAPOLEON KEPT HIS WORD.



THE great Napoleon, as is well known, spent part of his youth in the military school at Brienne. Of what use he made of his time here is shown in the way he commanded and conducted his wars, and by his life in general.

Napoleon was very fond of fruit, which is no uncommon taste with young people, and owing to this a poor fruit woman earned many a penny from him. It would happen sometimes that Napoleon had no money to pay for what he bought from the old woman, but she trusted him, and he would always pay as soon as he could.

When the time arrived for Napoleon to leave Brienne to put in practice what he had learned, and to show himself the skilled soldier and clever man he became, he still owed the woman a few shillings; for at the last time, when she brought him some peaches, he said—

"Good woman, I am leaving here, and find I cannot pay you for these, but you shall not be forgotten."

"Oh, noble gentleman," she answered, "go away quite easy on that score, and may Heaven keep you safely and make you a good man!"

In the midst of such a career as Napoleon's now became, it was not extraordinary that the

best memory should forget some little things, and that he forgot the old woman and his debt to her was not wonderful. In a short time Napoleon conquered Italy and went into Egypt; thence he returned to Paris and was made consul; there he restored peace and order, and was made the French Emperor.

All this time the poor old fruit woman in Brienne had still nothing but his promise "You shall not be forgotten." But, as will be shown, Napoleon's word, all through life, was as good and better than money.

After many years Napoleon again visited Brienne in disguise with a friend. Well might he have been moved on first entering, thinking over the past years, and of all the dangers he had passed safely through, and himself now an Emperor.

Suddenly, while walking through the town, he stopped in one of the streets, put his hand to his head, as one who thinks of something, and then mentioned the name of the fruit woman. Her home was soon found out, and there he and his attendant went.

A narrow door opened into a small but clean room, and here they found the woman kneeling with two children by the stove, preparing their meagre evening meal.

"Can I get some fruit here?" said the Emperor.

"Yes, certainly," answered the woman, "melons are just ripe"; and she brought some.

While the two visitors were eating the fruit the Emperor asked—

"Do you know the Emperor who is said to be here to-day?"

"Know him, I should think I did!" answered the old woman. "Many are the plates and baskets of fruit he has bought of me while he was here at school."

"Did he always pay regularly?"

"Yes, always."

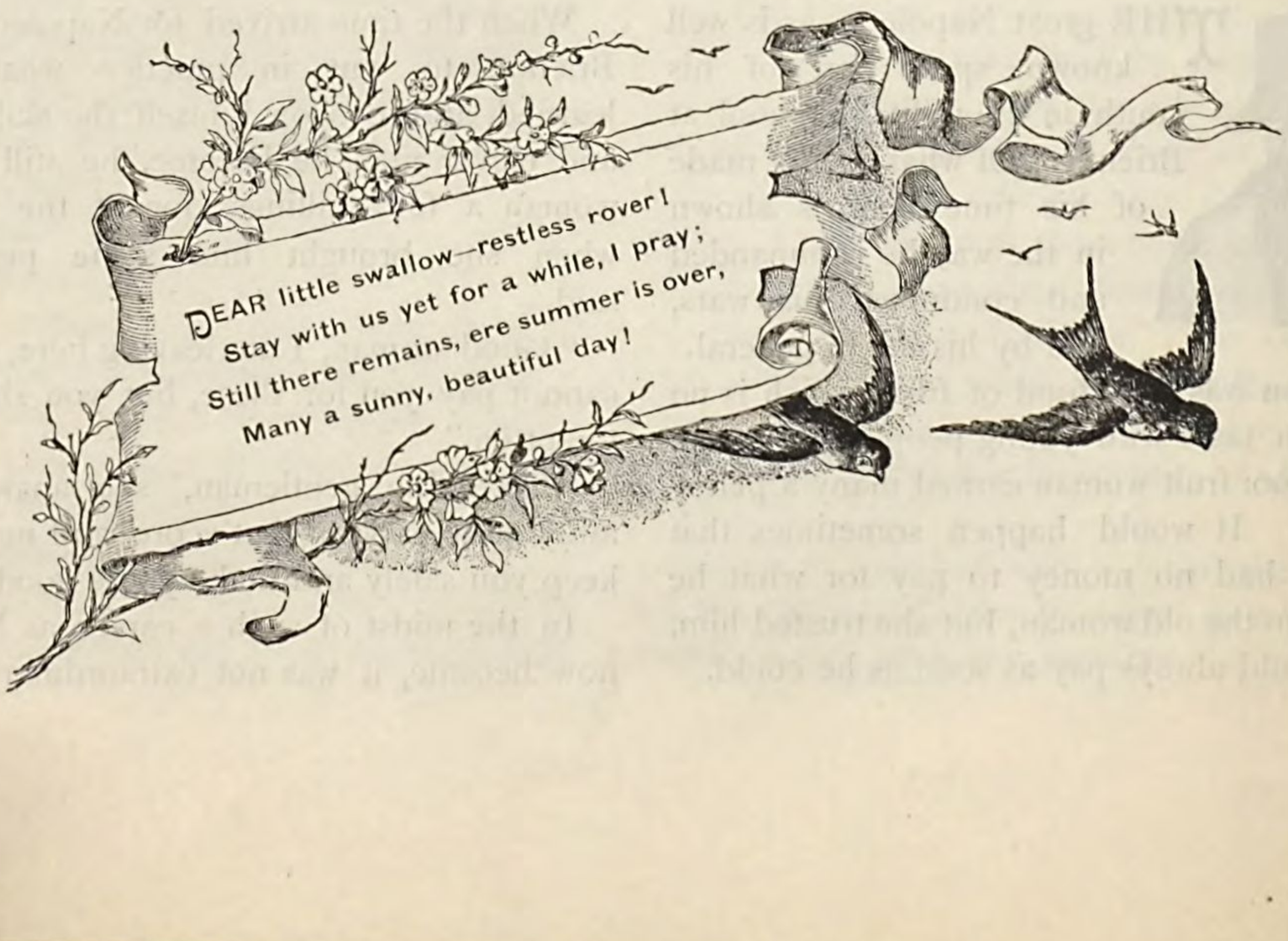
Then said the visitor to her, "Woman, either you do not tell the truth or you must have a bad memory, for, to begin with, you do not know the Emperor—for I am he; and I did not pay you as regularly as you say, for I owe you now some shillings."

At this moment the attendant counted out on the table a large sum of money. The woman, on recognising the Emperor and hearing the money jingle on the table, fell at his feet quite overcome with fright, joy, and thankfulness, while the two children gazed at each other not knowing what to do or say.

The Emperor afterwards ordered the old house to be pulled down and another built on the same spot.

"The house shall bear my name," he said, "and I promise to look after the children."

True to his word, Napoleon saw the daughter well married, and the son brought up at his expense, and in the same school from which came the great hero himself.



TO SCHOOL AND AWAY.

H. ATTERIDGE, *Author of "Bunty and the Boys," "Uncle Silvio's Secret," &c.*

CHAPTER V.—DISGRACE.

"WHO is that boy?" said Dr. Grindham.

The boy, covered with flour, felt his tongue dry up with fright; but he gasped out—

"Please, sir, I'm Gerald Brierly."

Mr. Vincent became extremely red, and looked at the boys no more. The French master suddenly leant his face on his hand. Gerald thought he was shocked; Tommy afterwards said he believed Monsieur Dubois was laughing. As for Mr. Peters, he looked at the unfortunate pair with a steady frown.

"Tommy Coker," said the doctor very gravely, "you are leading this boy astray."

"Oh no, sir," from Tommy. "I'm not, indeed, sir."

"It wasn't his fault," Gerald managed to say, with his tongue sticking to the roof of his mouth. "I got bolted into the store-room, and he let me out."

"What were you doing in the store-room?" said the doctor to Gerald very calmly, but with great firmness. "Suppose you and your father were staying in another gentleman's house, would your father consider it right, or polite, or well-bred if you were to intrude into your host's larder, and help yourself?"

"I—I never thought—not like that," stammered Gerald, feeling as if his blush must be showing red through the thick coating of flour. "I was only mixing up the flour barrel for fun."

"No doubt you set him on," said the doctor to poor Tommy. "You went to let him out; you knew all about it. No—don't speak! Everybody knows a boy only just come to the house would not make so free unless someone else had put it in his head."

"He——" began Gerald, trying to stick up for Tommy; but the doctor would not let him speak.

"Go now," he said. "You must come to my study in the morning, Gerald; you and I must have a talk."

Mr. Peters spoke suddenly in awful tones—

"I found him on his head to-day. Coker is teaching him to be noisy in the passages and to disregard the rules. It is a bad beginning."

"Wait!" the doctor said to the two boys, who had been backing gently towards the door. "This will be the best thing for us to say. You have had the privilege of a new boy, Gerald; now from to-morrow morning you will keep the rules and answer for your conduct just like any of the other boys. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," said Gerald faintly; and then they got out.

The moment they had passed beyond the library into the hall, Tommy Coker burst out—

"I say, Brierly, you might have spoken up, and said I didn't put it in your head. I don't care about being blamed for coming to you, but *—that* was not fair. Why didn't you speak?"

"He wouldn't let me."

Tommy burned under his sense of wrong; he began to think Gerald mean, after all he had dared and done for him.

"Then, when Mr. Peters said I made you break rules, you might have said a word for me."

"I couldn't," from Gerald.

"Yes, you could; and *I* wouldn't have let you be blamed unjustly. It's no matter to you: you are new till to-morrow; but I've lost my Wednesday half-holiday as sure as there's a tail on a cat."

Gerald could not appease Tommy; all the way up the stairs he grumbled.

"I don't care. It's the last time I'll pull a fellow like you out of a mess. What were you afraid of? Why didn't you say it was your own brilliant idea to go and make mud-pies in the flour barrel, or whatever you were at?"

"It was not my own idea; I should never have thought of it," said Gerald bitterly.

So Tommy Coker went to bed grieved and angry, and began to snore gently; and Gerald

spent half an hour trying to wash and brush off the flour.

It was a most unhappy end to Gerald's cake-making. He feared the talk with Dr. Grindham in the morning; he was sorry that instead of becoming a favourite, he had lost his best friend.

For a few moments he watched Tommy's troubled sleep; heard him muttering: "Now—butter-fingers!" in some dream of he Wednesday holiday, perhaps. Then Gerald's resolution was taken. He quickly made himself as presentable as he could, and went softly downstairs, feeling, as they say, as if his heart was in his mouth.

Crossing the hall, he heard the housekeeper in the kitchen passage telling one of the maids to "throw out all that dirty flour first thing in the morning."

So that was the end of Victor Maine's recipe for making school-cake.

Straight on Gerald went, across the dimly-lighted library. The door of the supper-room was half open, the light was bright within; there was the sound of voices talking, and an odour of cigar smoke was in the air.

Gerald was trembling; but he wanted so much to get Tommy off. Timidly he knocked; the knock was not heard.

"I must talk seriously to Tommy," the dreaded voice of Dr. Grindham was saying. "He is brimful of fun; I saw him nearly laughing while I was talking to him there—the little rascal! But there's not a bit of harm in him: as good as gold!"

"But the other boy—Gerald Brierly—wants keeping down," said Mr. Peters in hollow tones.

Gerald was terrified at hearing so much, against his will. He knocked again, but somebody was standing up and moving a chair, and he was unheard.

"He is so daring: he does not care what he does," said Mr. Peters. Gerald knew his voice well, and trembled. "Take my advice, Doctor—another knock from Gerald, but again it was not attended to—"there are some boys that nothing else will tame. I should enjoy thrashing Gerald Brierly."

"Not without my leave, if you please, Mr. Peters," said the doctor.

Gerald fled. He could not knock again. Away he rushed across the library, and fell headlong over the waste-paper basket and brought down the book-ladder.

Then they heard him. They came out too. The gas was turned on at once, and he stood before all the masters as if he had been a listener.

"I did not hear it on purpose," cried Gerald. "I was knocking ever so long—I—I——"

"There—you see for yourself!" said Mr. Peters.

"Oh, sir, I was not listening," cried Gerald. "I wanted to speak to you, and I knocked—I did."

"I believe you," said Dr. Grindham. Mr. Peters gave a small groan. "I hope," the doctor went on, "the day will never come when I shall have to disbelieve the word of any one of my boys. But I promise you, Gerald, you shall have an opportunity of speaking to me—a most ample opportunity, sir. I shall send for you in the morning."

Gerald did not sleep much. When they got down for their early run in the garden, he besought Tommy to be his friend, told him what trouble he had got into by trying to go back to speak for him, and finished by saying—

"I don't like Mr. Peters. He is a real cruel tyrant!"

"That's mild," said Tommy, and burst out laughing.

But he comforted Gerald greatly by calling him "a brick, after all" for trying to go back.

It was a terrible morning. Every time the schoolroom door opened, Gerald started, fearing it was the message bidding him come to the study. He wrote nonsense for dictation. His sums went wildly wrong. If six cheeses cost six pound ten, how much will two and a half cost? And Gerald made out, amid the laughter of the class, that the two and a half cheeses would cost twelve hundred and fifty pounds. Even Mr. Vincent, who was very gentle, said—

"Gerald Brierly, what *are* you thinking of?"

Why, of Dr Grindham, and he couldn't say so.

Still no message from the doctor; and everything went wrong all day. There was a singing lesson. Gerald had looked forward to singing,

and perhaps being one of the choir boys. But when he thought of Dr. Grindham, his voice stuck in his throat.

"That boy has got no voice," said the master.

"Oh yes, sir," from Gerald. "I sang lots at home."

"Then why don't you sing now?"

Why, indeed, but because he was dreading the summons to "come to the Doctor."

So the day of dread passed, and Gerald had begun to earn the name of an idler.

"The boy is not stupid," said Mr. Peters; "he is idle—stubbornly idle."

It was Mr. Peters who read night prayers, and there was no report.

A light broke in upon Gerald with intense relief. On the stairs he asked one of the big fellows, Clifford, the head boy—

"Is the doctor gone away?"

"Yes," said Clifford, and put a finger to his lips.

How well Gerald Brierly slept that night! It was perfect rest. Dr. Grindham was not in the house.

All the boys knew that he was gone next day, one telling it to another. Strangely enough, they were not at all glad. Mr. Peters was in charge, and Dr. Grindham had been called away by a telegram, and would not be back for a week. The school was more orderly than ever, the rules perfectly kept, the lessons better learned, everything more earnestly done. It was a mystery to Gerald, until Tommy Coker told him—

"It's an awful bore having to keep so straight. You see we are 'on our honour' when the doctor is away. We always try to have him pleased when he comes back. But I'll have a fine fizz out then; I feel like a lemonade bottle corked down."

"Oh! is that it?" said Gerald. "I thought everybody was afraid of Mr. Peters."

"Afraid!" cried Tommy, and laughed It was in the playground. "Of course not; he's not half bad, you know."

"He is a cruel tyrant," said Gerald, with quiet obstinacy. "I don't like Mr. Peters. Tell me, can any of the masters give a fellow a licking just if they get into a bad temper."

"No," said Tommy, "no fear—only by the doctor's order. And it must be something very bad if it comes to that with an Applewich boy."

"That's all right, then," said Gerald; and began at once to catch flies.

Before night he had a hundred and four flies, and a small quantity of sugar for their support, all carried in a paper bag in his pocket. The pocket bulged—but what schoolboy's pocket does not bulge with marbles, paper, twine, and tops?

For two days he watched Mr. Peters' desk: it was always locked. On Saturday evening he came in from the study room for a book, and found his opportunity. The windows were open. The garden was outside, under golden evening sunshine, and one could smell the scent of the roses. The maps stirred a little on the white walls with the breeze, which had come as a relief after a hot day.

Yes, the desk was left unlocked at last. Gerald mounted on the low platform of polished oak, and was just in the act of raising the lid when a shadow darkened the sunshine, and he beheld the head and body of Sneider leaning in at the nearest window.

"What are you up to?" said Sneider.

"My own business," said Gerald.

"Your business—at the master's desk!" said the gawky lad with the hay-coloured hair. He wriggled in at the window.

Gerald shut down the lid of the desk.

"What are you coming spying for?"

"I'm not spying."

"Then get out."

"Get out yourself."

It was easy to see how the dispute would end. Gerald and the bigger boy went wrestling to the window, and from the window to the door, and back to the window again, while a swarm of flies began to rise about their heads.

"You've spoiled it now!" cried Gerald. "You sneak!"

"Then what are you, if I'm a sneak?" replied the other. "Who went to the master's desk to read the report book or meddle with his things? Who's the sneak now?"

It was doubtful which dealt the first blow; but Gerald's took the more effect. They seemed to strike at the same moment. The foot of the

bigger boy slipped, and he fell, hitting his head against the corner of a bench.

Never in all his life did Gerald forget what he felt the moment after. The other boy slipped flat down on the floor, and lay with his forehead bleeding, and his freckled face ghastly pale.

Gerald knelt and raised his head, and called to him, wild with fear. Only a few seconds, and Sneider opened his eyes, and spoke very low.

"Call someone! Get me—water!"

Gerald flew to the study room, burst the door open, and called out—

"Oh, sir, come quick! I've killed him!"

The master came—and it was Mr. Peters. All the boys rushed in. Mrs. Weeds came, and the maids, and even the boy that wore a silver-buttoned jacket and cleaned the boots.

When they reached the scene of the fray, the "killed" lad was seated on the end of the form, mopping his face with his handkerchief, and crying with a dismal tune.

As Gerald would have said, he had "done for himself now" by calling everybody. And Sneider piped out that he was only trying to stop Gerald Brierly from "rummaging" the master's desk.

Mr. Peters said terrible things. He called Gerald violent. He asked him for what unlawful purpose he had "broken into the desk?" He spoke of the evil end of boys who begin by little things, and go on to robbery—burglary—crime—prison.

Gerald burst into tears. He could not stand it all before his companions.

"'Twasn't burgling," he moaned in indignation. "Twas flies."

"It's no use to show your temper," said Mr. Peters sternly.

"But I never touched anything of anybody's," Gerald broke out fiercely. And the kindest of the crowd of boys drew off quietly and went away, thinking it no business of theirs to witness their companion's trouble.

"Wait till Dr. Grindham comes back," Mr. Peters said, with a threat in his voice. "I'll teach you to stop your pranks; and"—looking at Sneider—"to control your violence."

"I'm sorry I hit you, Sneider," said Gerald bluntly. "But you know very well we were hitting each other, and you fell against the corner of the bench."

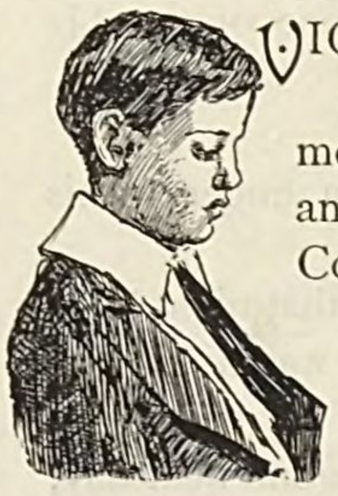
"Silence, sir!" said Mr. Peters. "Excuses will not serve you when Dr. Grindham comes back."

From that moment the boy felt doomed. He had never passed such a dismal Sunday. On Monday, lessons were hopeless.

At supper-time he was roused from his trouble by a shock of surprise.

"Boys," said Mr. Vincent, "a new companion. I introduce to you all—Victor Maine!"

CHAPTER VI.—ESCAPE.



VICTOR MAINE! Gerald felt as if his heart leaped into his mouth. Yes, it was Victor Maine, and he was come to Applewich Court.

He declined supper: he "had only just dined." There was not an atom of shyness about him. He made friends with the boys, and looked calmly at the crowd of strange faces. The masters were charmed. The Frenchman was heard to remark that he had "*l'air distingué.*"

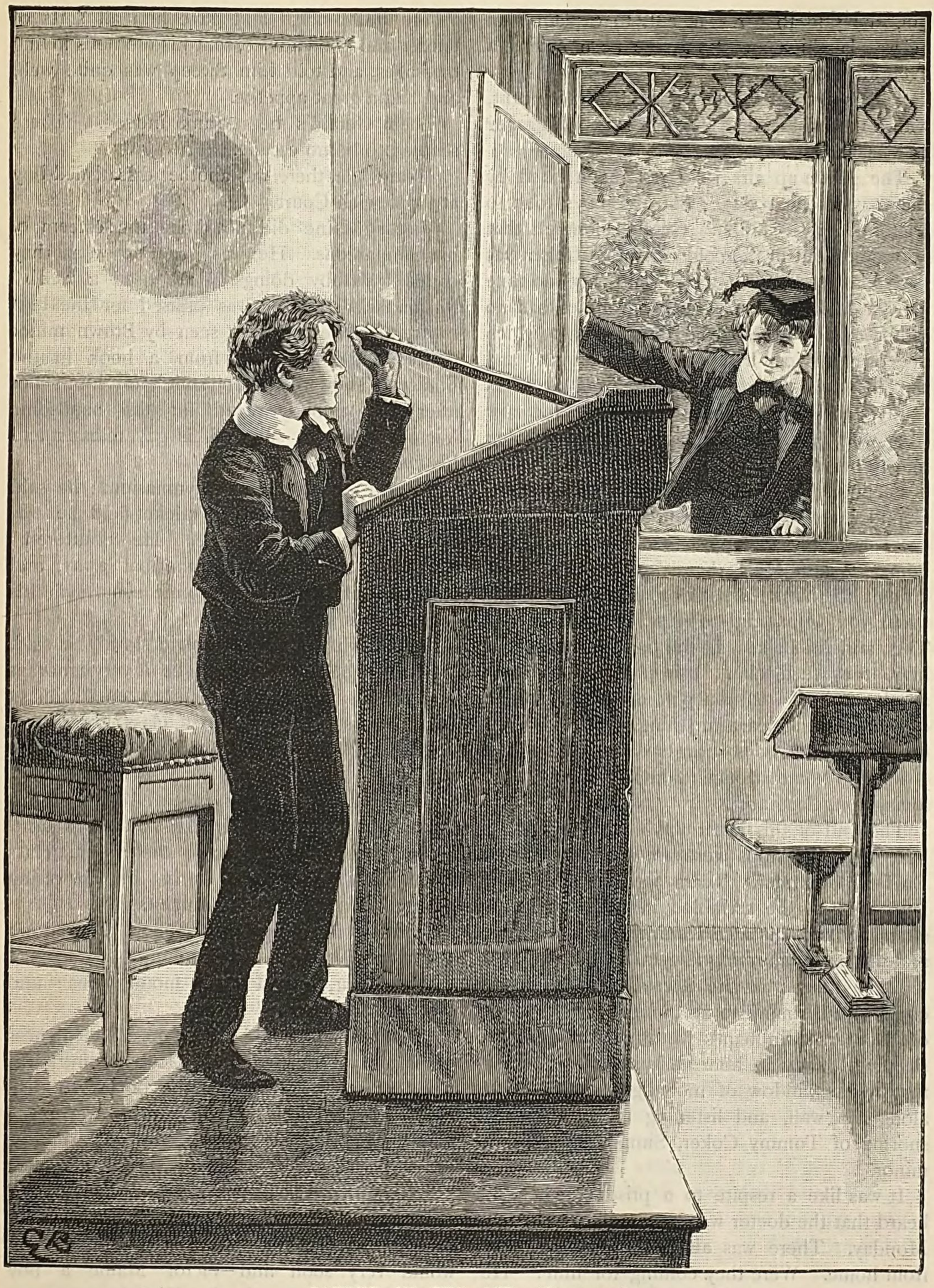
He shook hands with Gerald, and said, "Halloa, old chap!" And Gerald glowed with pride, and for the moment forgot all his troubles in the pleasure of being able to show before the others that he had known Victor Maine at home.

"My grandfather's doctor had heard where you were off to, and my grandfather wanted to pack me off to somewhere, so he sent me straight after you. Isn't it a joke?" said Victor, in rollicking good spirits.

"But it is a horrid school!" Gerald told him the moment he could say a word without being heard. "I tried all those tricks, and they all went wrong."

"You don't mean to say you did!" Victor Maine laughed heartily, and slapped Gerald on the back. He did nothing but laugh at the failure of all the freaks into which he had led the unhappy boy.

"I hear that Gerald Brierly has had some



CAUGHT IN THE ACT. (*See p.* 191.)

fun," he said to Mr. Vincent, to explain what he was laughing at. "Has he been having a lively time of it?"

"Oh, we never tell tales," said Mr. Vincent, with a merciful smile. "Where is your luggage? Is Mrs. Weeds unpacking?"

The grown-up airs were not much liked by the masters next day. But the boys took to Victor eagerly—at first. Gerald soon felt that he was left out in the cold. Tommy Coker was as true as steel; but Victor Maine had no time for Gerald, only laughed at his troubles, had no sympathy for him in the disgrace into which his own advice had led him. Victor had spoiled Gerald's school life, set all his ideas astray, and plunged him into mischief; and now —as worthless companions always do—he left him to his fate.

Feeling Wednesday draw painfully near, Gerald wrote to his father and mother—

"I am very unhappy. Do please take me home. Victor Maine has come to school here. I don't like him. My love to Edith and Fluffy when you write, and to Jess, and Polly, and Tots, and Ali Baba. Is the pony quite well? I hope they feed him. I would like to be at another school. If you please, let me come at once, as I can't learn anything. Tell mother I can't sleep, the boys snore so, and will be ill if I don't go home at once: I know I shall. Your loving son, GERALD."

The end of this letter was written in such a hurry that the stops were not according to the English Grammar. Tears were in the poor boy's eyes as he scribbled it, with his elbow stretched out, his face leaning over the paper, and ink on his hurrying fingers.

It was true that he learned nothing. He could give his mind to no thought but the terror of Doctor Grindham's return. And as for sleeping—many an hour he lay awake watching that white window of moonlight move slowly along the wall, and listening to the peaceful snoring of Tommy Coker, Simms, and Brown minor.

It was like a respite to a prisoner when he heard that the doctor was not to be home till Monday. There was also the welcome letter from home. Were they coming for him? He opened it;—no! His father thought he was "only home-sick," and gave him all sorts of tender and good advice, sent his mother's loving messages, and told him Sweep was quite well, and had a great appetite.

Then Gerald's heart sank indeed. There seemed to be no escape.

Meanwhile, there was another dissatisfied boy at Applewich Court.

Victor Maine did not keep the esteem of his companions. He was given to what they called "shabby doings." He used a "crib" for his tasks; and he was praised for the best essay, when he had been seen by Brown minor deliberately copying it from a book in the library. They did not "split" on him; but after that, nobody cared for the handsome Victor Maine, in spite of his gay manner and his lively songs.

He did not care for the gymnasium: he said it was "only fag." In the cricket-field he was too lazy to be of any use. He "buttered" the balls, and then flung the bat away, and sauntered off whistling a comic song, with his hands in his pockets.

Applewich Court was "horrid slow," he said. And when he was found to be a very ignorant boy for his age, in spite of that one brilliant essay, he was sent down to a class lower than Gerald's. This hurt his pride; he would not study.

"Why have you not prepared your translation?" the master would ask.

And Victor would make the whole class smile and the master frown by answering calmly, "Very sorry—too much fag!"

"But it is always the same. You don't touch your lessons."

"Well, sir, I find study monotonous; and the weather is warm."

Of course this could not go on. But idleness so calm and obstinate as Victor Maine's was being left for the wisdom of the doctor to deal with. There were no threats, no warnings; after the first lecture in private from Mr. Peters, he answered with gravity and very long words: "My grandfather, sir, has made exactly similar observations on many occasions." It was the opinion of the masters that Dr. Grindham would very soon find Victor Maine a boy unsuitable for the school. His character was

unlike that of the others, who were easily managed, with all their boyish faults. Victor Maine was too old for his years, and too hard for a boy ; his influence would be bad.

So for the present he was left to himself. But he did not like the class-work. He greatly disliked rules, and wanted liberty. This was what he meant by calling Applewich Court "horrid slow."

On Sunday evening, to Gerald's great surprise, Victor Maine came to him.

"The doctor is coming home to-morrow. It's nothing to *me*, of course," said Victor Maine.

The church bell was ringing across the quiet fields ; and Victor and Gerald were the first ready, and were waiting for the rest in the hall.

"Oh ! I'll get over it," said Gerald, trying to look "plucky," and feeling wretched.

Victor Maine lowered his voice. "I say—I am going to clear out of this next week. I can't stand Applewich Court."

"Going away ?"

"Hush !"

"But what do you mean ?"

"I mean that I am off," said Victor. "I can't stand any more of it. Will you come ?"

"You don't mean to run away ?" Gerald asked, in horror and fear.

"You may call it what you like. I am going to do for myself. Have you got any money ? We might both go together."

The coming of the others prevented Gerald from answering. They parted : Victor Maine had to go with another boy in the ranks.

At church, Gerald thought of his father's words about Victor. To-morrow was Monday : Victor was friendly again, and offered him escape. It was a terrible temptation, but the risk seemed too great, too wild. And obedience conquered. He went back feeling strong to do the right.

And, no doubt, he would have been strong if he had kept away from Victor from that time. But when the dreaded Monday dawned, and Victor seemed more friendly than ever, poor Gerald slipped little by little into a talk in the garden, hardly noticing that this was the companionship that had been forbidden.

They walked together down at the end by the roses and the beehives. Victor was not startling him by any wild ideas now ; he was only telling him that the gardener's boy said there was a circus in a field over at the village, and what fun it would be if they could go.

Gerald's heart was too sick to enter into such sport ; but the voice of Victor sounded kind, and it kept him from thinking of Dr. Grindham and listening to every noise of wheels on the road.

After dinner, when everyone was on the playground, the page-boy with the silver buttons came straight from the house. Gerald turned pale. Yes, the page-boy was looking for him : there was no mistake about it.

"If you please, Master Brierly, Doctor Grindham wants you."

The moment the page was gone Gerald turned to Victor Maine.

"He has sent for me. I can't go. I *can't !*"

His face was white. Victor drew him away from the rest.

"How much money have you got ?"

"A sovereign and some shillings. But oh ! what's the good of money ?"

"Look here : don't be frightened !" said Victor Maine cheerfully. "Put off the evil day. Come along to the circus, my boy. In for a penny is in for a pound. It will cheer you up. Let the doctor catch you after, when he can."

The face of Gerald brightened ; he almost smiled. Victor gave him no time to think. "Run at once for your light overcoat ; you have your cloth cap : that will do ; it would never do to go with a mortar-board. Take care you don't get caught on the stairs, and mind you bring the money."

"Where will you be ?" Gerald asked as fast as he could speak. "How shall we get out ?"

"Go by the glass door—cricket-field—creep by the hedge—they are all in the playground—gate at the end."

In five minutes they had both got out, and were in the lane leading to the high road. They had their overcoats—but why ?—their small cloth caps, the sovereign and the shillings; and Victor kindly took charge of the money, as he was the elder.

It afterwards came out that Victor had only half-a-crown. "My grandfather was a regular screw," he said, "when I was coming away—said I spend too much, and that I must learn to do without it. See if I shall ! Never mind, Jerry, my boy ; I'll pay you back."

He said this when he was putting all the money into his pocket. And Gerald politely said it was all right; indeed, he was most thankful to Victor for having brought him right out in this masterly style. It would put off the terrible interview for another hour—and, perhaps, if he could only forget Dr. Grindham, he might enjoy the circus.

After they had run for ten minutes along the road, the brass band of the circus sounded not far off. The village children were trotting hand-in-hand down a lane full of hens and chickens. The boys followed, and soon came to an open ground where there was a cluster of vans and a very large round tent.

Sixpence each! up the three steps, and under the curtain, and in! How Gerald's heart beat! What an adventure it was after all!

The performance was to commence at two o'clock. The seats all round were filling. Two horses stood in the middle of the ring, just to give the people something to look at. They were queer horses, spotted white and black and brown, as if they had been painted like toys.

To divert the audience while they were waiting, a clown came out and sat on a small tub, and made faces at them. The boys clapped for the clown, and yelled with delight. Gerald forgot Dr. Grindham. It was such fun!

There was a mysterious doorway with a ragged red curtain across it: through there the horses and the riders would come out to the ring. Now and again the edge of the curtain was pulled aside, and a girl in dirty white and tarnished tinsel peeped out and popped in again. Gerald thought her like a fairy or a princess, and was quite happy.

Then in came the band from outside, and blew such brass music that one boy could not hear the other shout. The two horses in the middle began to rear and plunge. The clown cried "Cock-a-leekie!" or something of the sort, which the audience laughed at as a great joke. And up he went like a whirl of chalky white and red, and rode away in, with a foot upon each of the horses.

Then the princess with the spangles rode round and round; and so did a brigand with a red waistcoat and a green plumed hat. The clown came out and asked some of the oldest riddles in the world; and then there was a conjurer, who tossed up five oranges and spun an umbrella on the tip of his nose. The last grand display was the procession of one hundred and fifty horses, and this was why Gerald wanted all the time to remain till the very last.

For the "hundred and fifty horses" there was an opening made at the other side of the ring, just opposite the mysterious door, where, of course, the curtain now was pulled aside.

Full gallop—out came the horses, one at a time, each following the other's tail—appearing at one side, running straight across, and out at the other.

"Oh, there's the spotted one again!" cried Gerald.

"Why, there's the dirty white one," Victor grumbled.

"Oh! they are all the same, they are all the same: it is grand sport," Gerald shrieked. "Now the brown one will come next, you'll see! There he is! Now the spotted one again."

Shouts from the back of the tent told that the horses were going round outside to get in again —always five inside and five out in a circle running for their lives.

The boys enjoyed the trick. Some of the village folk coming out with the crowd were saying—

"Dear, oh dear! did you ever see such a number? Why, the poor things must be suffocated in *them* few vans!"

"Holloa!" said Victor suddenly, "it's five o'clock."

Gerald stood aghast. They had been out all the afternoon. How could they go back?

"Suppose we don't go back at all?" said Victor Maine. "Come along, quick, to the railway-station. Why shouldn't we be free?"

The truth flashed upon Gerald. Victor Maine had never meant to return when he came out that afternoon.

"You may go back if you like," he said to Gerald, "and be licked within an inch of your life. I am not going."

For a moment Gerald's head became giddy. The outside of the circus tent, the crowd, the cottages in the distance, the sunshine, and the very ground all seemed to swim.

Then he walked away with Victor, just because

he could not stand there. Their walk was quick and troubled. It led them to the railway-station.

"If I must go anywhere, I'll go home," said Gerald.

"But won't you have a holiday first? I can tell you I am not going home at once," Victor Maine said. "I don't like being packed off to school every time my grandfather gets cross. I have run away from one before, and been turned out of three: so he won't try it again, I should think."

Gerald stared.

"Why, Victor, I thought it was the mutton."

"Did you?" Victor laughed. "You *are* a simpleton, Jerry. Hurry up! That must be our train. He dashed into the station, took tickets to town, and they were both steaming off full speed before Gerald well knew where he was going.

If he had only known what was to happen, he would have gone straight to his father even in the midst of his disgrace. Or, having no money now for the train, he would have walked back every step of the way to throw himself on the Doctor's mercy. He little dreamed that he was about to taste more than ever the bitter fruit of companionship with Victor Maine.

"Where are we going?" he asked.

"To London, my lad," the other explained—"to Waterloo Station—that's close to the Strand."

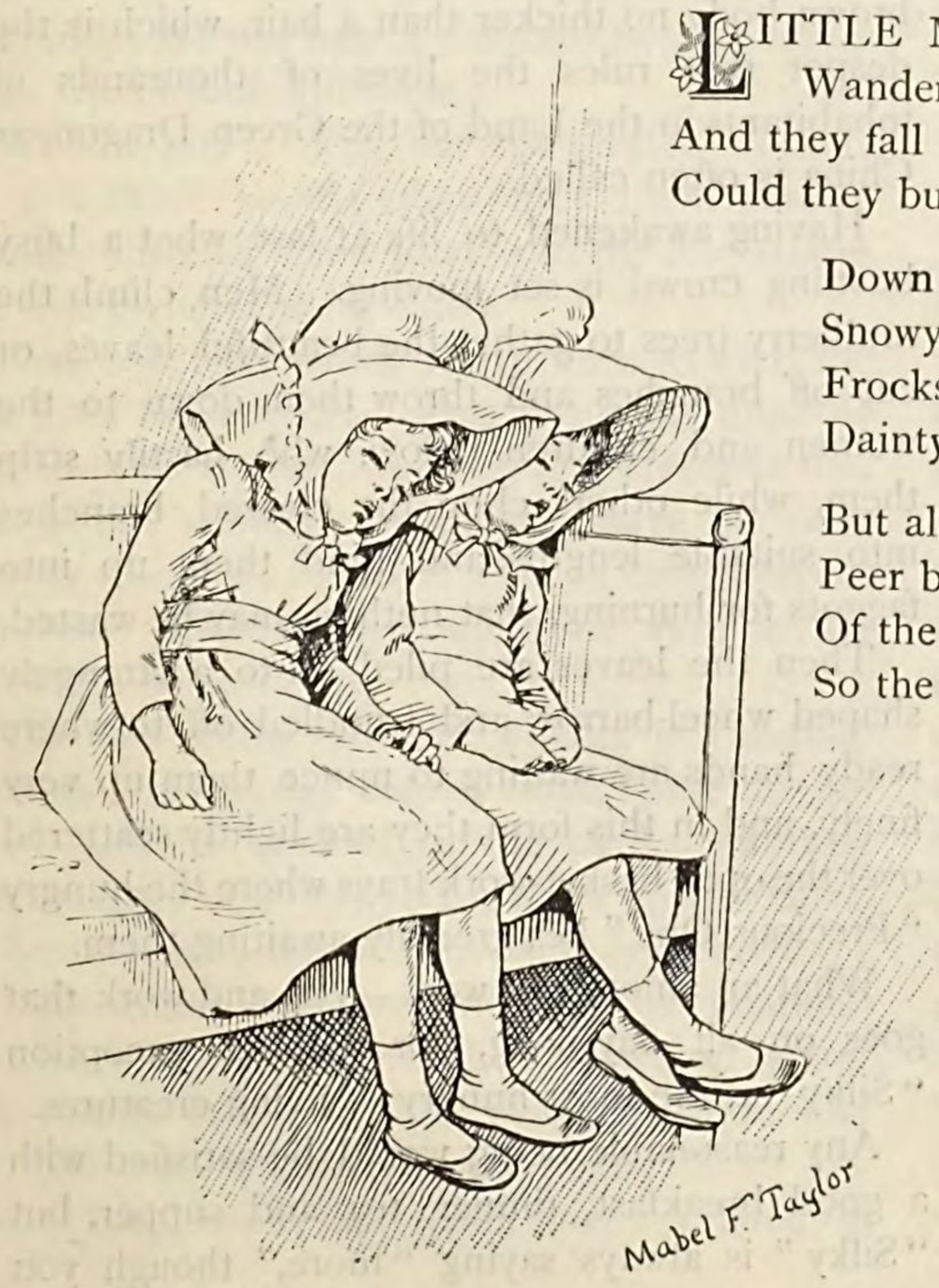
"Do you know where Gray's Inn is?" Gerald whispered. "Don't let us go there, because if I met my father I'd just fall down flat."

"We shall be miles from Gray's Inn," Victor assured him. "Two or three holidays will do us no harm."

There was a gentleman opposite to them reading a newspaper. Victor calmly looked at the back of it. His quick eyes noticed an advertisement:—"Wanted, boys of musical talents; easy employment, and money at once. Apply to Signor Solfeggio," at an address which Victor noted in his pocket-book, thinking himself "a sharp lad."

(*To be continued.*)

A PAIR OF TRUANTS.



LITTLE Mistress Marjorie and little Mistress May
Wander in the garden on a summer's day,
And they fall a-thinking, would it not be grand
Could they but discover the way to Fairyland?

Down the lane they patter, with eager little feet,
Snowy bonnets shading faces fair and sweet,
Frocks so fresh and spotless bound with sashes gay—
Dainty little maidens are Marjorie and May.

But although they wander for many, many hours,
Peer beneath the fern-fronds, peep within the flowers
Of the land of fairies they cannot find a trace,
So the storm-clouds gather on each dimpled face.

When the sun is setting, at the close of day,
Someone finds them weeping—Marjorie and May,
To his home he bears them, and a message sends
From the tiny truants to their anxious friends.

Cheered by kindly welcome, soothed, and warmed,
and fed,
Like a drowsy poppy nods each weary head;
When papa comes for them, Marjorie and May
To the Land of Dreams have surely found the way.

MABEL A. CLINTON.

FROM OVER THE SEA.

III.—SOMETHING MADE BY THE "PRECIOUS ONES."

"WE are now going to set out on our travels together through a country of very strange people indeed—a country where mothers instead of kissing their babies, smell them, saying "How nice they smell!"; where the children play battledore and shuttlecock with their feet, and start to read a book at the bottom of the last page, and finish at the top of the first, because that is the way it is printed and meant to be read; where everybody puts their surname first: thus—Smith John; and when Smith John is puzzled about anything, he stands on one foot while he scratches the sole of the other.

Have you guessed the name of this curious land?

Topsy Turvy Land? Ah, that is what it should have been called, no doubt, but on the map it is named China. It is of something that comes from China that I am going to tell you.

Here and there on the sunny sloping sides of the beautiful mountains of China are many groves of low dark green trees.

There is an air of mystery about these groves, for though you may see many of the curiously dressed people, with their hair hanging in long pigtails down their backs, passing in and out amongst the trees, evidently busy about some kind of work, you hear no sound whatever. All is silence, and nothing that makes a noise may come near.

Built in the centre of the quiet grove is a curiously contrived house of wood, and here it is that the "Precious Ones" of China are born, live their short lives, and die.

Very well are they tended and cared for, very plentifully are they fed and waited upon, and no wonder, for much of the wealth of the Chinese has come to them through their "Precious Ones," whose English name, by the way, is Silkworm.

Ah, you had not guessed that. When next you see a silkworm you will look at it with greater respect perhaps if you know that hundreds of years ago its great great grandfather was a "Precious One" too, and lived in China in the centre of a sacred grove of mulberry trees.

The smallest beginnings have often the greatest endings. And you will see, if you read on, how so tiny an atom as a silkworm's egg, which is not as large as a pin's head, is the cause and beginning of one of the largest industries in China, and the oldest in the whole world. First of all, the orchards of mulberry trees have to be planted, pruned, and cared for, so that they may be in perfect order, ready to provide food for "Silky" as soon as he is hatched. Hundreds of men, women, and children may be seen busily employed just before hatching-time either amongst the trees or laying out the myriads of tiny eggs upon the shelves which range all round the wooden house prepared to receive them.

Then comes a warm sunny day, and the silkworm's egg cracks, and out crawls a tiny brown body no thicker than a hair, which is the despot that rules the lives of thousands of inhabitants in the Land of the Green Dragon, as China is often called.

Having awakened to life at last, what a busy bustling crowd is set moving. Men climb the mulberry trees to gather the beautiful leaves, or cut off branches and throw them down to the women and children below, who hastily strip them, while others chop the cleared branches into suitable lengths, and bind them up into faggots for burning, that nothing may be wasted.

Then the leaves are piled on to a strangely shaped wheel-barrow and trundled off to where ready hands are waiting to mince them up very finely, and in this form they are lightly scattered over the open basket-work trays where the hungry "Precious One" lies greedily awaiting them.

What an amount of work—yes, and work that goes on all day long, for without exception "Silky" is the most hungry of living creatures.

Any reasonable being would be satisfied with a good breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper, but "Silky" is always saying "more," though you

will be astonished, I think, to learn that he has no fewer than twenty-four meals each day.

If you wish to see inside one of these silkworm houses, you must first assure the owner, Mr. One-lung, that you will not speak above a whisper, for the "Precious Ones" do not like to be disturbed by sounds, also that you will sprinkle yourself with water dipped out of an earthenware basin near the door. This is to purify you from all smell, as the "Precious Ones" are very sensitive on that point also, though you wonder at it, for the first thing noticeable when the door is opened is the unpleasant sickly odour.

Hush! what is that strange sound that greets your ear, which reminds you of fine rain pattering down upon the roof? It is just the noise of the many millions in whose presence you stand, busy in consuming their last meal served.

In the course of its hungry life each silkworm takes three days' rest and falls fast asleep, then it awakes and is as active as ever. Presently it shows signs of wishing to spin, and is placed where it may do so without fear of disturbance; and soon our "Precious One" disappears from view in a beautiful yellow cloud, and when next visible is no longer a worm but a chrysalide.

The best of these are kept apart, but the remainder are put near a charcoal fire, the fumes from which soon kill them.

What a pity! Yes, but the garden workers do not think so, for they turn them into a savoury dish of some kind, and the chrysalides are every one of them eaten.

And now busy hands set to work to wind the silk from the cocoon. This is usually done by the Chinese women, who are very clever at that part of the business, though they have but poor clumsy machines to do it with, in every respect the same old-fashioned affairs as were in use hundreds of years ago.

The silk being now all wound, is carefully packed, and strange clumsy boats flock up the rivers and lie moored to the banks, awaiting their cargoes of glossy yellow done up into bales, to bear them to the busy over-crowded city.

Very queer craft are these. The boatman and his wife and children live always on board, the untidy sort of cabin made of wood and patched with matting on the deck is all the home they know, and each gives a hand in loading the vessel till she can carry no more, when the tattered sail is hoisted, the long poles by which the boat is steered got out, and away on the stream towards the world of fashion goes the industry of the "Precious One."

After many long days of travel on the river, our bales of silk arrive at the end of the first stage of their journey. The big city with its multitudes of inhabitants has been reached. Pigtailed men crowd upon the wharfs, pigtailed men bustle along the narrow streets, pigtails jostle one another everywhere, and loud is their incessant clatter of tongues. Here and there in the throng totters the unfortunate Chinese lady, with feet no bigger than those of a child of three in England, all because of a horrid fashion and the idea that tiny feet are beautiful.

High on the shoulders of lean wiry men, through the narrow, crowded, dirty, noisy streets, go our bales of beautiful merchandise; and presently are hoisted by cranes on board the ship that is to carry them across thousands of miles of water to the factories of home.

Hark to the "heave ho" of the sailors as they prepare the good ship for starting, and the Chinese workers ashore as they pull upon the ropes to move the great loads of merchandise: we can hardly fancy this is the same country as that which we have just left in quiet amongst the mulberry groves.

For numbers of years no one but the Chinese knew anything about the Silkworm, and they carefully guarded their secret, till some travellers visited China and saw the whole process. Then they returned to their own country, carrying away with them, inside a hollow cane, a number of silkworms' eggs, and so the secret became common property.

It would be impossible to tell the number of things, both useful and beautiful, which are made from the fine yellow threads spun by these marvellous creatures, nor could we possibly count the thousands of busy fingers it has kept employed in a hundred ways before it is handed to us across a shop counter, strangely altered perhaps since the time we first saw it, and with a tale of many experiences, though of all none could be more marvellous than that it was spun far away over the sea by a Chinese "Precious One."

EDITH A. FINDLAY.

A HOUSEFUL OF MONKEYS.

IT could not be said that Mr. Gobbo was a charming old gentleman, or even a pattern papa, although he always considered himself both.

He brought up his large family after his own simple plan: which was to slap them when they cried, rap their knuckles when they laughed, and send them to bed promptly whenever they made a noise.

He maintained that this was the only perfect method; and certainly when Mr. Gobbo was at hand Mr. Gobbo's children were remarkably well-behaved.

It was quite a sight to see them walking two and two, turning up the whites of their eyes, and looking as doleful as a rainy Saturday.

Poor things! they did not enjoy a very amusing life, in spite of having lessons in tight-rope dancing.

Monkeys will be monkeys, and what was life to them since they might not climb trees and swing by their tails?

"GIVING HIS HAND TO A LADY" (*p.* 202).

It was chiefly this fancy for climbing that drove Peterkin, the eldest boy, to run away from home, just after he had been caught stealing the apricot jam.

Peterkin had a special gift for grimaces; he could make twenty different ones before you could say the multiplication table as far as four times five; it was really astonishing how he did it.

Then there was the eldest daughter, who, because her face was nearly as black as a sweep's, had been appropriately named Bianca, which means white.

Bianca was a lively puss, and she had had her ears boxed and her knuckles rapped perhaps more than any of her brothers and sisters.

Mr. Gobbo complained; however, it seemed to do her no good at all, for Bianca was as gay as a lark, and sang about the house in a most distracting manner.

It was quite a shock to her father's nerves when one day Bianca burst into the room and told him she wanted to be a concert singer.

Being an old gentleman of few words, but of great decision of character, he said nothing, but simply threw a stool at his supplicant daughter.

Bianca dodged the stool, and stood her ground; she wanted to be a singer, and there was an organ-grinder passing through the town, who had offered to take her with him and train her.

Mr. Gobbo grew furious; his whiskers curled for very anger, his chin disappeared into his collar, and he seemed to have no forehead left at all.

Then Bianca thought it prudent to skip out of the room; and that night she made up a little bundle of clothes, stole a German sausage and a captain's biscuit out of the larder, and climbed down from her window by the aid of the Virginian creeper.

The organ-grinder was preparing to take himself and his organ out of the village, where the people seemed to have no soul for music; but his eyes brightened when he saw Bianca with her little bundle, the sausage sticking out of one end.

He was quite willing to take her away with him, because folk with no ears for music might yet have eyes for a monkey's engaging tricks; and a monkey is not generally to be had for nothing.

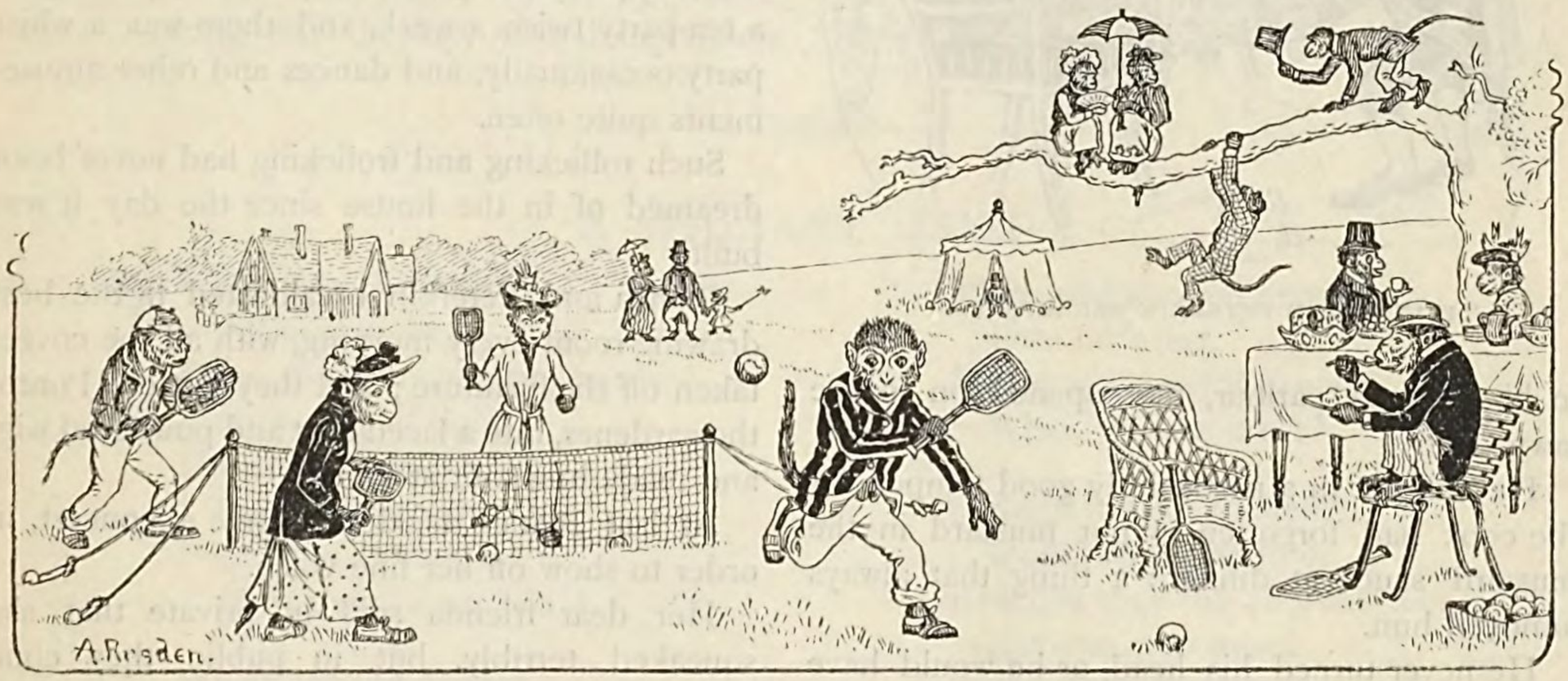
Poor Bianca very soon found that the life of an organ-grinder's monkey is not all joy.

As soon as they were out of the village her master took away her bundle, and ate her sausage and captain's biscuit; then the next day he made her put on a ridiculous little red coat and cocked hat, and caper about while he

ground the organ. He found that her singing attracted people, because it is an unusual thing for a monkey in a red coat to do anything but dance; so he made her sing until she nearly dropped from fatigue.

It was such a hard life that Bianca resolved to run away—although where to run she knew not—anything would be better than capering on the street pavement in a military coat and hat.

Her master had been accustomed to fasten her at night by a little chain to the organ, but as he got farther from Bianca's home he grew



"THERE WAS A TENNIS PARTY" (*p.* 202).

less watchful; and one evening she succeeded in slipping away.

All through the night she plodded wearily on, not having the least idea where the road led to.

All she thought of was how to get away from the organ and its tiresome tum-tum-tum.

The morning broke, and she saw a procession advancing along the road: such a remarkable procession that it made her stare with amazement.

For there were a couple of camels being led along, and three great elephants paced one after another with noiseless tread; there were caravans decorated with wonderful pictures, there were triumphal cars with gaily-dressed people seated upon them, half asleep, there was the largest horse and the smallest pony in the world—at least, so the bills said—and there was a mule covered with scarlet trappings, with somebody riding upon him.

It was this somebody who attracted Bianca's attention, and she gave a little shriek.

"Peterkin, why, Peterkin!"

In an instant the rider had jumped down and rushed towards her.

It was indeed Peterkin, whose antics had landed him in a travelling menagerie, in a top hat and frock coat, dressed like a fashionable gentleman.

The first thing he did was to seize Bianca, and spring with her through a gap in the hedge.

The mule waited a moment, and then stolidly followed its companions, while the brother and sister exchanged a hearty hug.

"I ran away too," cried Bianca. "Oh, Peterkin, how beautiful you look in that coat!"

"Not bad, I think," answered Peterkin, with a smirk; "but as for me, why, I have been running away all the time. I have made my fortune, too; feel my coat-tails: they are lined with threepenny-pieces; and before we go home, Bianca, I'll buy you a hat and dress: something stylish, you know, with plenty of colour about it."

"Do you mean that we shall go home?" cried Bianca in consternation.

"I'm a made man now," said Peterkin, in a satisfied tone; "and I want to see the old place again. You needn't look so scared, Bianca. I

will protect you; and if it comes to the worst, we can always run away again."

* * * *

Old Mr. Gobbo was seated reading the paper

"BIANCA AND PETERKIN BREAKFASTED."

in his summer parlour, that opened on to the lawn.

He was not in a particularly good temper, for the cook had forgotten to put mustard in the mustard sauce at dinner: a thing that always annoyed him.

He never turned his head, or he would have seen a gentleman in a tall hat sitting on the window-sill, giving his hand to a lady, elegantly dressed, and assisting her to climb up beside him.

He never turned his head, or he would have recognised Peterkin, although he might not have known Bianca in her fashionable red dress and yellow hat.

It was certainly wrong of the two to spring down with a sudden wild whoop upon the old gentleman, and they would not have done it if they had guessed what would be the consequences.

They expected he would storm at them; but instead of that, he rolled his eyes, kicked out his feet, and muttered something like "Gabadara dadoo!" which means nothing, even in monkey language.

The truth was that old Mr. Gobbo had had a fit, so they sent for a doctor, put him to bed, and then Peterkin and Bianca declared that they were master and mistress, and that it was high time the family enjoyed itself.

Oh, the change that came over the scene then! it would have turned Mr. Gobbo's hair white if he had known a quarter of what went on.

For the young Gobbos were all giddy by nature, and they were quite willing to enjoy themselves, now the "cat" was away.

They invited all the neighbourhood to come and assist them, and then there were fine doings.

Peterkin was fond of lawn-tennis, so there was a tennis party every other day; and Bianca gave a tea-party twice a week, and there was a whist party occasionally, and dances and other amusements quite often.

Such rollicking and frolicking had never been dreamed of in the house since the day it was built.

Bianca and Peterkin breakfasted in the best drawing-room every morning, with all the covers taken off the furniture; and they put old Ponto, the gardener, into a laced coat and powdered wig, and made him wait at table.

At last Bianca decided to give a concert, in order to show off her fine voice.

Her dear friends said in private that she squeaked terribly, but in public they complimented her upon her fine soprano; and

"BIANCA WAS SINGING."

everybody came to the concert because they knew there would be a good supper afterwards.

Well, Bianca was singing, and Signor

Rattopatto, the celebrated Italian musician, was playing her accompaniment. The Signor, by the way, was so talented, that he played with his feet as well as his hands.

The audience was yawning and hoping the music would soon be over, when there bounded into the room a remarkable figure in a Turkish dressing-gown and a scarlet nightcap: a figure with flaming eyes and a brandished stick: old Mr. Gobbo, in fact, who had at length recovered from his attack, and was now as lively as ever.

A scene of general consternation ensued. The guests all disappeared as if by magic, some rushing out through the door, others through the window, and one or two leaving by way of the chimney.

Mr. Gobbo danced about, flourishing his stick; but he could not catch either Bianca or Peterkin, for at the first sight of him they had fled.

"I thought it was too good to last," panted the former, stopping when they were half a mile from the house. "What are we going to do *now*, Peterkin?"

"Why, we will go on the stage, to be sure," said Peterkin, turning a somersault.

And so they did, for they were caught by a man who had a troop of performing monkeys, and unless they have managed to run away again, there they are still.

SHEILA.

A VALIANT DEED.

WOKE they in darkness,
All in a fright;
Down dived three curly heads,
Quite out of sight.
Under the bed-clothes,
Safe, safe retreat:
Poor little shiverers,
How their hearts beat!

Where lay the danger
What the alarm?
Under their father's roof
Nothing could harm.
Rolling and rumbling,
Somewhere below,
As if the rocking-horse
Tramped to and fro.

Out through the passage,
Now in the hall,
Opened the kitchen door,
Heard one and all.
"Thieves," whispered Bobbie;
"Thieves," sobbed wee Sue;
Only brave hero Jack
Knew what to do.

Grasped he his good sword,
Gave Bob his gun,
Sue took her trumpet shrill,
March was begun.

Three white-robed heroes,
Bare little feet,
Pass down the dusky stairs,
What, what to meet?

Straight for the kitchen,
Light 'neath the door.
Reached they the doorway dim,
Not one step more.
"Hey, little masters,
Hey, little miss,"
Cried one with blackened face;
"Why, what is this?"

Poor little snowdrops,
Pale with affright,
Only a kindly sweep,
Black, black as night,
Stood to confront them—
"Ha, ha!" laughed he,
"I'm sweeping the chimney,
You came to see."

Sue blew her trumpet,
Sounded retreat;
Back up the dusky stairs
Scud, scud their feet.
Three little shiverers
Crept into bed;
But 'twas a valiant deed,
They always said.

EMILIE SEARCHFIELD.

The Horse among the Ancients.

Some learned men not long ago gravely discussed whether the horse was first used for driving or for riding by the peoples of the ancient world, and they seem to have agreed that it was driven, being mainly employed in battles to draw chariots. The ass was regarded as lazy and stubborn, not suited therefore for warfare or long journeys, and was accordingly mostly used for riding. Then the ox was set apart for ploughing, and has not even yet been discharged from this office in some parts of the globe. So long as the chariot remained the most important weapon of battles, and so long as the old nations had nothing better to do than live in a state of constant warfare with one another, it seems probable that the horse would be reserved for purposes of war. And so we may agree with the learned men aforesaid that the horse was driven before it was ridden.

He was Present at the Coronation.

It is not generally known that one of the spectators of the coronation of George III. in Westminster Abbey on the 22nd of September, 1761, was no less a personage than Prince Charles Edward. The Pretender happening to be in London at the time—where he passed under the name of Mr. Brown—was curious to see the ceremony. A gentleman who recognised him said to him that he was the last mortal whom he expected to find there. "Ah," replied the Prince, "let me assure you that the person who is the cause of all this pomp and magnificence is the man I envy least." By this date the Jacobite hero—the "Charlie is my Darling" of the famous song—had grown a sadder and a wiser man.

Rescued from the Flames.

Not long ago a fire broke out in a factory at Taunton, which at one time threatened to be attended with serious loss of life. Before it was discovered, it had got a complete hold of the lower part of the building, the upper rooms of which were occupied by the owner, his wife, their seven children, and a friend. All escape by way of the stairs being cut off, the eldest boy bravely jumped from the first floor window and, fetching a ladder, placed it against the back windows of the upper rooms. By its means everyone was rescued from what seemed to be certain and terrible death. The boy's pluck and presence of mind well deserve to be recorded in these pages.

The Jewellery of the Dusky African.

Like most half-civilised and a good many wholly civilised folk, the natives of Africa are fond of adorning their persons. The brass trade of Birmingham largely benefits by this amiable weakness, rings of that metal being in great demand for the purposes of jewellery. Some may remember Livingstone's description of a Makololo belle whose costume consisted of brass rings and beads. Upon each leg she wore eighteen solid rings as thick as a finger;

nineteen of the same sort bedecked her left arm and eight her right. Besides these, three copper rings hung under each knee, and an ivory ring adorned her elbow. On one occasion an order was sent to Birmingham for twenty thousand dozens of these "bangles," which needed in the making of them no less than $23\frac{1}{2}$ tons of brass. Rings and coils of thick brass wire as well as brass coins are used as a kind of money in certain parts of the Dark Continent.

Chinese Boatwomen.

On many of the rivers in China the small boats are owned and managed by women. The occupation suits them, for most of them look the picture of health. It is no joke to navigate a boat on some of the busier rivers, but even girls may be seen propelling a vessel in and out among the crowded shipping with great skill. At Canton, for instance, a part of the town is cut up by streams and canals, and is almost as thickly inhabited as the land. Thousands of people live in boats—the shop in the prow, and the house in the stern. If trade is slack in one quarter they shift to another, or make a tour in the neighbouring country. Thus it happens that the girls of the family, as well as the boys, learn at an early age to manage the boat, and as they grow older they generally contrive to get one of their own. The picture on this page shows a Chinese boatwoman and her family.

A CHINESE BOATWOMAN AND HER FAMILY.

The Nest in a Paper Bag.

There hung from a nail in the wall of a green-house in Buxton a paper bag containing seeds. One morning two robins flew into the house through a hole in the glass, and built their nest in the bag. Some time afterwards six wee robins appeared; and though one of them died, the rest thrived so well that their combined weight threatened to bring the nest down to the ground. The paper bag with its burden had attracted so much curiosity, that it was decided to preserve it from danger, and accordingly the nest was skilfully propped up. Of course a time came when the birds left their home for good, but the bag was so much the worse for wear that it could not be used again for nesting purposes by the industrious robins.

How the Scottish Regalia were saved.

After the battle of Dunbar (1650) the Scottish regalia were conveyed to the castle of Dunnottar lest they might be seized by the victorious Cromwell. Presently this castle was besieged by the English troops. The governor held out bravely, but the time came when surrender was

inevitable, and the Crown jewels were again in danger. But at this moment they were saved by the ingenuity of a clever woman, Mrs. Grainger, the wife of the clergyman of Kinneff. Accompanied by her maid she paid a visit to the governor's lady, permission to do so having been freely granted by the English commander. When Mrs. Grainger and her maid returned, this soldier courteously assisted the former to mount her horse. Both women carried parcels, but this gave rise to no suspicion, for the commander probably did not know that the regalia had been hidden in the castle. But the bundles that the ladies bore as gifts from the governor's wife really contained the crown, sceptre, and sword of state! Mrs. Grainger reached Kinneff safely, and the same night the regalia were concealed in a hole below the pulpit of the parish church. There they lay till after the Restoration, when they were delivered up to Charles the Second.

Protected by a Dog.

There is one poultry yard in which a firm friendship exists between a cock and a dog. The friendship arose in this way. The cock was being constantly bullied by another cock, and one day a fierce fight ensued that ended in the victory of the tyrant. Not knowing where to run for safety, the beaten bird sought refuge in a dog kennel close by. Here the bully followed it, but the moment it put foot on the straw, the dog rose up and growled so threateningly that the cock retired at once. Ever afterwards the dog and the bird that it had sheltered and befriended remained on the best of terms with each other.

Travelling by Hammock.

So great a portion of Dahomey, a country on the west coast of Central Africa, is marshy, it is not possible to grow proper food for horses, and therefore the only way of travelling other than by water is by hammock. According to the distance, from six to twelve carriers are needed for each hammock, two at a time bearing on their heads the pole from which the hammock in which the traveller lies is slung. The carriers always go at the trot, and relieve each other frequently, but without changing the pace. In crossing a river should the carriers be neck-deep in water, the whole of the men mass together and bear their burden at arm's length above the water. Should the river be too deep to ford, a raft is made and driven from bank to bank by the carriers swimming behind it. The men sing throughout the journey, and instead of going to sleep at the close of their day's work, they sit up for hours dancing and singing. Hammock travelling is said to be unpleasant at first, but becomes much more agreeable as one grows accustomed to it.

A Strange Visitor at Court.

Jonas Poole, a mariner of England, who flourished at the beginning of the seventeenth century, made a voyage to the Arctic Ocean in 1608, and captured a couple of young walruses on an island near Spitzbergen. One of the animals died on the way home, but the other reached London alive, and was thus the first walrus ever seen in England. Jonas and his shipmates lost no time in taking the strange young creature to Court, where King James and the noblemen beheld it with wonder. Unfortunately the poor thing died before the end of the year. But it had lived long enough to win the good opinion of all who knew it for the teachableness of its disposition.

A Hint from the Duke.

The Duke of Wellington, like most eminent men, was continually being written to by all sorts of persons about all sorts of things: chiefly, however, it was his advice or his help that was asked for. In most cases such letters were accompanied with testimonials and other documents, and as these had generally to be returned, being almost always the originals, the sending of them usually secured an answer to the application. But when the Duke replied he enclosed a slip upon which was printed this useful hint—"Avoid to impose upon others the care of original papers which you wish to preserve." The fact that these slips were printed shows that he must often have had occasion to use them.

The Death of "Grip" the Raven.

An unpublished letter of Charles Dickens, dated June 15, 1841, recently sold in London, was found to contain an interesting account of the death of "Grip," the novelist's famous

raven. The bird was spared the pains of a long sickness. It was only ill a day. "I sent," wrote Dickens, "for the medical gentleman (a bird-fancier in the New Road) on the first appearance of his indisposition. He promptly attended and administered castor oil and warm gruel. Next day the patient walked in a thoughtful manner up and down the stable till the clock struck twelve at noon; then staggered twice; exclaimed 'Halloa, old girl' —either as a remonstrance with his weakness, or an apostrophe to death: I am not sure which—and expired."

Queen Victoria's Latest Study.

Besides being Queen of England Her Majesty, as everyone knows, is also Empress of India. It is interesting to learn that in order to be able to understand the manners, customs, and literary productions of her Oriental subjects, but especially of Indian women, the Queen has, during the last three years, been studying Hindustani — the chief language spoken in the Indian Empire. She has given up almost daily a portion of her time to regular lessons under a tutor, and such has been her progress that she can now read and write in the language. The Duke and Duchess of Connaught, who spent several years in India, are also familiar with Hindustani. It is said that the Shah of Persia, on the occasion of his last visit to England, was exceedingly surprised and gratified to hear of the Queen's accomplishment.

The Bull-dog won the Game.

In the United States the favourite game is called baseball, which may be described as a kind of rounders. Once there were two clubs that were very evenly matched, and the annual contest between them was always a most exciting contest. One year victory was about to declare itself after a neck-and-neck struggle, when the captain of the side that looked like losing muffed the ball, and did not hit it far. Defeat seemed certain, but just when the fielder was near the ball, someone in the crowd released a bull-dog that also went after it and reached it first. When the fielder came up, the dog lay on the ground with the ball between its forepaws. Every time the youth tried to "shoo" it away, the dog snarled unpleasantly. Meanwhile, of course, all the men had got "home," and the game was won by the side that appeared to be in for a beating. Though protest was made in consequence of the part played by the bull-dog, it was not sustained. The referee's decision, however, seems unjust.

The First Turncoat.

Emmanuel, one of the earliest of the Dukes of Savoy, is known to fame as the Turncoat. He obtained this nickname for a curious reason. His territories were inconveniently near to the forces of both Spain and France, with which Powers he found it necessary to be on the most friendly terms, as they were often in the habit of invading his dukedom. However, he had to side sometimes with the one, sometimes with the other, according to which was the stronger at the moment. So he had a coat made that was blue on one side and white on the other. When he took part with Spain he wore the blue side —the Spanish colour—out; when he wanted to stand well with the French, he turned the white side out. There was something to be said for the poor man in such a fix, but history, that has no mercy, only knows him as the Turncoat. A favourite instance in England of a man who always took care to be on the right side was the famous Vicar of Bray.

In Praise of the Pig.

It is a popular error to suppose that the pig is a dull and dirty animal. In the Island of Sicily, at any rate, the creature shows a great deal of intelligence, and a very proper regard for cleanliness. Every autumn the pigs are taken to feed in the oak woods, and then they follow their keeper like dogs. They answer the blast of his horn, and even elect a chief whose leadership they recognise during their life in the open air. At nightfall they are driven to their sheds, which are remarkably clean and dry. It would almost seem as if they had come to an understanding amongst themselves to keep their houses in good order; for if a pig is found breaking this unwritten law, the rest attack him furiously and even kill him. Thus it happens that though as many as 400 pigs may occupy one huge stye for twelve hours, the floor will be perfectly clean and wholesome at the end of that time.

PAGES FOR VERY LITTLE FOLK.

HOW THE GAME ENDED.

"CATCH me if you can,
Here among the trees,
Tom, and Dick, and Nan,
I'll dodge you as I please."

Off then Harry flew,
While, with shouts and laughter,
Fast the merry crew
Followed gaily after.

But, though hard they tried,
Harry was too fast,
Always dodged aside—
But was caught at last

Just because he slipped.
On his nose he fell,
Over him they tripped—
There's no more to tell.

A VISIT TO THE RABBITS.

LIT-TLE Ann was eat-ing her break-fast in the nurs-er-y, so she did not know any-thing a-bout the new rab-bits. She had not been well, so nurse did not wake her, but let her sleep on till Rose and Lu-cy had gone in-to the gar-den.

She dip-ped a piece of toast in-to the milk in her cup, then she look-ed up and said, "Where Ro-sy and Lu-cy, nurse?"

And nurse said, "They have gone to see the rab-bits."

"Me go too," said Ann, push-ing away her cup.

But nurse said "Not yet," for Ann was not well enough "to go out of doors."

Now whilst nurse and Ann were talk-ing, Rose and Lu-cy had gone as fast as they could to see some new rab-bits their fath-er had bought. They had talk-ed to the gar-den-er about them, and had said—

"We will bring some-thing for them to eat, and they like milk to drink; they don't drink wa-ter, do they?"

"Oh yes, they do, miss; it is quite a mis-take to sup-pose they don't drink wa-ter. It is very cru-el to keep them with-out it; I al-ways put a good sau-cer of wa-ter in the pen, and they can drink it or not as they like."

Then John went a-way to his work, and Rose and Lu-cy felt they could scarce-ly wait till the next day to see the rab-bits.

The next morn-ing Rose and Lu-cy went off quite ear-ly aft-er break-fast.

They had tak-en their bas-kets with some crusts of bread and some pars-ley, for they thought they should like to feed them.

They found John wait-ing for them, and he o-pen-ed the door of the hutch.

FEEDING THE RABBITS. (*See p.* 210.)

"Are not they beau-ties, miss?" he said.

"Oh, the loves!" said Rose; "may I have one of them to nurse, John. I would not hurt it; I would be ver-y gen-tle with it."

"Well," said John, "I don't like rab-bits be-ing han-dled too much, but you may hold one of them just for a minute or two till I come back."

And he lift-ed out one of the rab-bits and pla-ced it on Rose's lap.

She strok-ed it gen-tly, and the rab-bit did not seem a-fraid, but nib-bled at a piece of pars-ley that she held for it. When she had nurs-ed it for a short time, Lu-cy said that she al-so must have a turn.

Aft-er that John re-turn-ed, and put the rab-bit back in-to the hutch, where the lit-tle girls pla-ced crusts for them to eat.

Rab-bits like crusts, and Rose and Lu-cy were ver-y hap-py watch-ing them.

"And when Ann is well again," said Rose, "we will bring her to see the rab-bits." J. G.

MINNIE AND HER DOLL'S HOUSE.

MIN-NIE was so bu-sy dust-ing the rooms in the doll's house that she did not see what Har-ry was do-ing. She had just wash-ed the win-dows and rub-bed them till they were as bright as they could be. All at once she look-ed round, for Har-ry said, "Oh! oh! oh!" and was knock-ing some-thing a-gainst the ta-ble. Min-nie soon saw what it was. It was one of her wax dolls that Har-ry was hold-ing, and as she look-ed she saw that Har-ry was push-ing his fin-gers a-gainst its eyes as if he would poke them out.

"HARRY WAS PUSHING HIS FINGERS AGAINST ITS EYES."

Min-nie sprang up and ran a-cross the room.

"Oh, you naugh-ty boy!" she said, and she took the doll a-way from him.

Har-ry be-gan to cry.

"It is of no use cry-ing," said Min-nie; "I am not go-ing to let you spoil an-y more of my dolls; you

have brok-en three al-rea-dy. It is ver-y bad of you. I put your lit-tle ta-ble for you, and got out the dog, and the swan, and the cock, and the birds for you to play with, and you might have been con-tent. No, you must not have my doll."

But Har-ry said he would have it, and he cri-ed so loud that his moth-er came to see what was the mat-ter.

When she heard what Min-nie had to say, she said that of course Har-ry must not spoil an-y more of Min-nie's dolls. And then, as he still went on cry-ing, she said she must take him out of the nurs-er-y, and he must sit still on a chair by her un-til he could be a bet-ter boy.

So Min-nie was left a-lone to fin-ish the clean-ing of the doll's house.

There were four rooms in the house: a kitch-en, a din-ing-room, a draw-ing-room, and a bed-room. And Min-nie care-ful-ly dust-ed the chairs and ta-bles, and the so-fa in the draw-ing-room. Then she put a lit-tle white cloth on the ta-ble in the din-ing-room, and set out the tea-cups and sauc-ers, and tea-pot and cream-jug for the dolls' tea. The dolls were now sit-ting in the draw-ing-room, in which was a pi-an-o, al-so a mir-ror o-ver the man-tel-piece. A doll dress-ed as a cook was in the kitch-en, and one as a house-maid was stand-ing by the ta-ble in the din-ing-room.

"'HOW NICE IT LOOKS!'"

"How nice it looks!" Min-nie said. "Would not Har-ry like to see it?"

And just then the nurs-er-y door o-pen-ed, and Har-ry and his moth-er walk-ed in.

Har-ry had left off cry-ing, and he went up to Min-nie.

"Har-ry sor-ry; won't hurt dolls a-gain."

Then Min-nie kiss-ed her broth-er and show-ed him the doll's house.

"Is it not nice?" she said. "You shall help me to play with it." J. G.

THE FAIRIES' WELL.

THERE'S an old deserted well, far away among the hills,
And near it is a lofty spreading tree;
No one ever passes by it but the fairies and the birds,
And 'twas one of them who told this tale to me.

"On the Green Banks of Shannon."

Words by Thomas Campbell. *Music by* C. A. Macirone.

Voice.

Piano.

Allegro.

p

1. On the
2. Poor

green banks of Shannon, when Shee-lah was nigh, No blithe I-rish lad was so
dog! he was faith-ful and kind, to be sure; And he con-stant-ly loved me, al-

cres.

hap-py as I! No harp like my own could so chee-ri-ly play, And wher-
though I was poor: When the sour-look-ing folks sent me heart-less a-way, I had

f

cres.

f

-ev-er I went was my poor dog Tray.
al-ways a friend in my poor dog Tray.

OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES.

HIDDEN PROVERB.

1. THERE is a fierce dog, do not touch it.
2. This plum is bad; may I have another?
3. No, our workman cannot come; he is ill.
4. We will not help him; he only quarrels.
5. Do not say any more, for I cannot come with you.
6. Dick spilt the ink over his trousers.
7. Put the milk in the room where the tools were kept.

HILDA NEWBIGIN.
Greenbatt House,
Alnwick, Northumberland.
(Aged 14¼.)

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

MY first is in arrow, but not in sword.
My second is in Florence, but not in Maud.
My third is in butter, but not in ham.
My fourth is in rhubarb, but not in jam.
My fifth is in tearful, but not in merry.
My sixth is in bush, but not in berry.
My seventh is in searching, but not in found.
My whole is a flower that trails o'er the ground.

BEATRICE L. DAVIES.
45, *Redcliffe Square,*
South Kensington.
(Aged 11.)

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

MY centrals, read downward and across, will form the name of a month.

A consonant. Human beings. A useful article. A plume. A month. A valuable jewel. Grave. An inclosure for beasts. A consonant.

KATHARINE MITCHELL
(Aged 11.)
6, *Douro Place, Victoria Road,*
Kensington.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THE initials and finals, read downward, will give the names of two noted statesmen.

1. An animal.
2. A town in England.
3. A flower.
4. A sick person.
5. Emphasis.
6. Something to wear.
7. To unfasten.
8. A fruit.
9. A river in England.

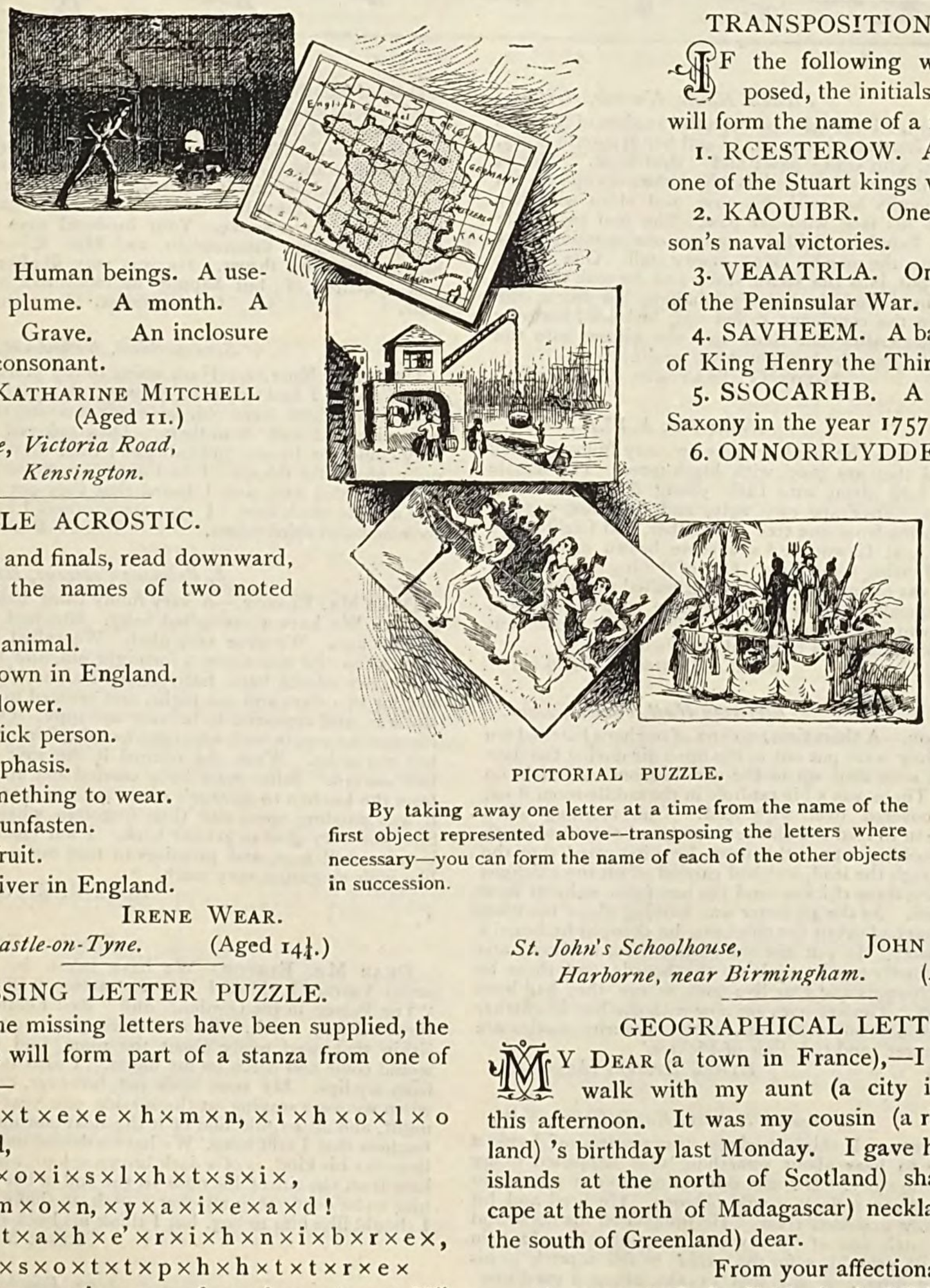
IRENE WEAR.
Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
(Aged 14¼.)

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

WHEN the missing letters have been supplied, the whole will form part of a stanza from one of Scott's poems:—

"B × e × t × e × t × e × e × h × m × n, × i × h × o × l × o
× e × d,
× h × n × v × r × o × i × s × l × h × t × s × i ×,
T × i × i × m × o × n, × y × a × i × e × a × d!
× h × s × h × a × t × a × h × e' × r × i × h × n × i × b × r × e ×,
A × h × m × h × s × o × t × t × p × h × h × t × t × r × e ×
F × o × w × n × e × i × g × n × f × r × i × n × t × a × d?"

JOE POWELL.
High Street, Shaftesbury.
(Aged 11½.)



PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

By taking away one letter at a time from the name of the first object represented above—transposing the letters where necessary—you can form the name of each of the other objects in succession.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

IF the following words be transposed, the initials read downward will form the name of a famous battle.

1. RCESTEROW. A battle in which one of the Stuart kings was defeated.
2. KAOUIBR. One of Lord Nelson's naval victories.
3. VEAATRLA. One of the battles of the Peninsular War.
4. SAVHEEM. A battle in the reign of King Henry the Third.
5. SSOCARHB. A battle fought in Saxony in the year 1757 A.D.
6. ONNORRLYDDE. A celebrated siege of the 17th century.
7. TOARUM A General who distinguished himself in the Indian Mutiny.
8. AOEUR EDND. One of the Duke of Marlborough's victories in France.

JOHN E. JOHNSON.
St. John's Schoolhouse,
Harborne, near Birmingham.
(Aged 11½.)

GEOGRAPHICAL LETTER.

MY DEAR (a town in France),—I have been for a walk with my aunt (a city in N. Carolina) this afternoon. It was my cousin (a river in Cumberland) 's birthday last Monday. I gave her a (a group of islands at the north of Scotland) shawl, also an (a cape at the north of Madagascar) necklace. (A cape at the south of Greenland) dear.

From your affectionate friend,
(A county in Ireland) (A city in Michigan).

ELSIE BAKER.
9, *Salutary Mount,*
Heavitree, Exeter.
(Aged 12½).

Firfield House, Knowle, Bristol.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I thought perhaps the readers of LITTLE FOLKS might like to hear about my cat. I call her Minnette Smut, because she is black, with white paws and "shirt-front." She is very fond of one of the horses named Bobby; she gets up into his manger, and he smooths her with his nose, and plays with her tail, while she pats his face with her paw. She had two little kittens; they were found in Bobby's manger one morning, and were then moved into the manger of an empty stall. One day a visitor's pony was put into the spare stall, and he took up poor Smut by the back in his mouth, and was shaking her like a dog shakes a rat. When the coachman called out, he tossed her over his head into the air. After that Smut took the kittens into the loft, and would not let them be brought down again.

HILDA G THATCHER (Aged 10¾).

Naini Tal, N.W.P., India.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—The monkeys here are very funny. They run about wild, and they are grey, with black faces. The female monkeys run and leap about with their young ones hanging to their necks in front. They are very ugly, and they leap a great distance. They spring from one tree to another, and frighten the ponies. When I was at Cawnpore I saw some brown monkeys in the bazaar (market) eating something. One of the big ones thought that the little one was eating too much, so it pulled the little one's ear, and made it squeak. I also saw the place where the people were killed in Cawnpore in the Mutiny. There is a monument there now. The monument is a beautiful marble angel.

SHEILA JAMIESON (Aged 8½).

Eccleston Hall, Prescot, Lanc.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—A short time ago one of our hens hatched ten little chickens. They were put out in the open air during the day-time, and at night were shut up in the saddle-room, which is on the ground floor. There was a big rat-hole in the saddle-room floor, but it has been covered over with lead. One morning when the gardener came in to feed the chickens he found only three with the hen, and on looking round the room he discovered that the rats had eaten through the lead, and had carried off all the chickens except three. These three chickens and the hen (also unhurt) were taken to a safe place. As the gardener was looking about the room to see where the rats had taken the chickens, he thought he heard a noise under the floor. He put his ear to the floor to listen, and heard it more distinctly; so he took up the boards, and there he found three dead chickens and four live ones, where they had been dragged by the rats. The live ones are now with the hen in another room, where there are no more rats. My favourite stories are "Uncle Silvio's Secret" and "A Pair of Pickles."

ETHEL HARVEY (Aged 14¾).

8, *Nevern Square, Earl's Court, S.W.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I think perhaps the readers of LITTLE FOLKS would like to hear about something that happened to my cousin, as it is a true story. He was out riding on the pampas in South America, and saw a flock of wild pigeons. He fired and hit two, though he only wounded them. He jumped off his horse and stooped down to catch one of them which was fluttering along in the grass, but while searching for the other he felt a prick in his hand, and looking down, he saw that a snake, about a yard long, had fastened itself to it. He hit it on the head with his gun, and it fell dead. He turned to his friend who was riding with him, and told him that he had been bitten. His friend, on looking at the snake, saw that it was one of the most dangerous and venomous snakes of South America. Then turning to my cousin, he cried, "Ride as quickly as you can to the house, and get my wife to give you a glass of brandy. Go at once, as it is a matter of life and death to you." My cousin sprang on his horse, and galloped as hard as he could. As he got in sight of the house, he felt himself reel in his saddle, and it was with difficulty he reached it. When he arrived, he threw himself into a chair and gasped out, "I have been bitten by a snake. Your husband says give me brandy." Then he became unconscious, and Mrs. K—— had to pour the brandy down his throat. He was very ill after that, and his life was despaired of; but happily he recovered, and was home last year.

G. WINIFRED MACANDREW (Aged 14½).

Severn Bank, Newnham, Gloucestershire.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I am going to tell you about some guinea-pigs I had. I had some baby ones: the mother died when they were about three days old, so every morning I made some bread and milk and took it to them. They enjoyed it very much until they could eat lettuce and cabbage; then they left it. They grew quite nice little things. I had some others, so at last I gave them to our garden boy, and I heard that they got on very well. One had a quite black face. I sent some others I had to a show; they took first and third prizes.

DOLLY BALFOUR (Aged 10½).

8, *Belmont Crescent, Hillhead, Glasgow.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—A very funny thing happened in our house lately. We have a cat called Sally. She had a little kitten a few months ago. We were very glad. We called her Queenie. One day, when she was about a fortnight old, and hardly able to crawl about, we missed her. Sally roamed about the house looking for her for two days and one night, and seemed to have no idea where she was, and appeared to be very unhappy. On the second morning mother was in bed, when she heard a faint mewing coming from her wardrobe. When she opened it she saw poor little Queenie half-starved. Sally must have carried her up the two long stairs from the kitchen to mother's room, put her into the wardrobe when it was standing open, and then forgotten where she had put her. She was very glad to get her back. I am pleased to say Queenie is quite well now, and promises to turn out a very fine cat. We like your magazine very much.

ELSIE R. STEVENSON (Aged 8½).

Glendwr, Brixton Hill, S.W.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—We have taken in LITTLE FOLKS for seven years. I think I like the stories "Bunty and the Boys," "The Palace in the Garden," and "Red Feather," best, but I like them all very much. Two or three years ago I had a dear little siskin that used to fly about the room, and when I whistled it would come and perch on my finger. I also taught it to take seed from my lips. My poor little pet, however, came to a sad end, for when we were staying at the seaside one year a cat killed it in the night, and all I could find of it the next morning consisted of a few feathers that I still keep. We have a dachshund called Peter. He is large for his kind, is of a dark brown colour, and is forty-five inches long from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail. I have taught him to be dead, to jump over a stick, to shake hands, and to trust. I should like him to beg, but I think his back is too long.

ELSIE M. DAY (Aged 12).

27, *Eastbourne Terrace, W.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I am going to write you a little letter. It is about a sparrow we saw in the fountains in Kensington Gardens. We were with our governess, and my little brother told us he saw

a young sparrow; then we ran down to the water, and after a while we were able to get it out. First we did not know what to do with it, but at last we thought we would take it home; and then we put it in a cage, and gave it some bread, water, and canary seed. It was rather feeble at first; then it got lost twice, though we found it afterwards underneath the bed; and next it got up to the trapdoor. Our little sparrow soon got quite well and flew away quite happy. I have eight volumes of LITTLE FOLKS. I had two given to me when I had the measles, and I like them *very* much. I have lent them to many little friends, and one little girl who visited us did not want to go because she was so interested in it. If they are as fond of it as I am, you would have to print a great many volumes. My governess is waiting for me to do my music, so "Good-bye." E. LILY CURRIE (Aged 9¾).

15, Via Calsabigi, Leghorn, Italy.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Perhaps some of the readers of LITTLE FOLKS would like to hear about a little goat we had up in the country. We have a place situated near Volterra, to which we go in the summer. I had several pets there, among which was the goat. She followed the men belonging to the house about like a dog, and was very frisky. One day I was reading a volume of LITTLE FOLKS, when this little goat came up to me and would not go away again, though I tried to make her do so. Suddenly, as I was turning over a leaf, she made a snap at it, and took a great piece out of the corner. I tried to make her leave go, but she insisted on eating it up. So much for her appreciation of LITTLE FOLKS. It is needless to say that I did not leave books within her reach again. Last winter was so severe that the poor thing died of the cold, leaving two little kids, who are quite as frisky as herself. HERMINA J. HENDERSON (Aged 10¼).

Walsgrave Vicarage, near Coventry.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I intend to tell you how we spend May Day here. The school children choose a May Queen. The queen rides on a pony in front of the children, and after all comes a cart with the smaller children. We go round the village and to the farm-houses. I like "Nobody's House" and "The Queer House Next Door" very much, and also the short tales. "How Four Busy B's Spent Six Wet Afternoons" I think are very jolly. This is the first time I have written to LITTLE FOLKS.

PHILIP D. ELLIS (Aged 10¾).

Albany House, Byfleet, Surrey.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—One day a hen was laying an egg in a barn underneath the manger of a cow's stall, and a cat was about twelve inches off, with three little kittens about a day old. A little while after the man came in to milk the cows. Hearing a noise, he went to see what it was, and found that the hen had all three kittens under her wings, and the cat was trying to get them. The cat and the hen had a fight; the cat scratched the hen, and the hen pecked the cat. But the hen got the best of it, and kept the kittens, which she nursed as if they were her own chicks, and the cat came and lay down beside the hen, and they have become warm friends. When I saw the kittens they were peeping from under the old hen's wings. KATIE GILES (Aged 10¾).

NOTE.—Each Letter sent to the Editor must be Certified by a Parent, Teacher, or some other responsible person, as being both *True and Original* as regards all the facts that are described.

THE "LITTLE FOLKS" HUMANE SOCIETY.

THE LITTLE FOLKS Humane Society was founded by the Editor in January, 1882, for the purpose of inculcating Kindness towards Animals; and in order to become a *Member* the accompanying "form of promise" must be copied out, signed, attested, and forwarded to the office of the Magazine.

The name of the sender will then be inscribed on the Register of the Society, and Certificates of Membership sent to any who desire to have them, if *stamped addressed* envelopes be enclosed for the purpose. (The limit of age for enrolment is 21.)

Members will be eligible to become *Officers* of the Humane Society, and receive Officers' Certificates, if they induce Fifty other Children to join, and send in that number of "promises" to the Editor *all together*.

The "form of promise" (to be attested by a Parent, Teacher, or other responsible person) is as follows:—

To the Editor of LITTLE FOLKS.

[Here insert full name.]

I ..... hereby undertake, as far as it lies in my power, to be kind to every living creature that is useful and not harmful to man.

[Full name.]

.....

Witness (of signature) [Address.]

....

.....

(Date)

..... (Age.....)

All communications to the Editor in reference to the Society should have the words "LITTLE FOLKS Humane Society" on the left-hand top corners of the envelopes.

ANSWERS TO OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES (*p.* 142).

METAGRAM.

Bound, hound, mound, pound, round, sound, wound.

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

STRAWBERRY.

CHARADE.—LEGHORN.

BURIED NAMES OF RIVERS.

Tweed. Kennet. Arun. Aire. Congo. Sark. Trent.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

PARIS—SEINE.

P alo **S**. **A** lsac **E**. **R** ig **I**. **I** nterlake **N**. **S** on **E**.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

RAMSGATE.

1. **R**oxburgh. 2. **A**lbemarle. 3. **M**arguerite. 4. **S**nake. 5. **G**ranite. 6. **A**ntelope. 7. **T**itmouse. 8. **E**uphrates.

FLOWERS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

Sweetbriar Buttercups. Cowslip. Tea Rose. Maidenhair Fern. Tiger Lily.

MENTAL HISTORICAL SCENE.

Caius Marcius Coriolanus, his mother Veturia, his wife Volumnia, and her two children. They are pleading for him to make peace with Rome.

PICTORIAL REBUS.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

A PICTURE FOR GRANNY.

WE'RE going to have our picture taken,
Dinah, my darling dolly, and me;
Mother wants it to send to granny,
Who lives in a country across the sea.

I wanted to wear my sash and ribbons,
My white silk frock, and my buckled shoes,
But mother said granny would like me better
Just as I am, if she could but choose.

"WE'RE GOING TO HAVE OUR PICTURE TAKEN."

Dinah looks sweet in her dainty muslin,
And see how nicely I've curled her hair!
I *think* I pinched when I screwed the papers,
But still my pet did not seem to care.

Mother has promised to give me sweeties
If I stay quietly just like this;
And if you are good, my darling Dinah,
Your little mother will give you a kiss.

CASSELL & COMPANY, LIMITED, LITH. LONDON.

DOLLY'S LECTURE.

(p. 217.)

DOLLY'S LECTURE.

'TIS very well to smile now,
But you gave me such a fright,
Oh, Dolly, when I missed you,
In the middle of the night!

I thought we played together,
When you fell into the stream;
And I said, just half-awaking,
"That was surely but a dream;

For, spread about my pillow,
Lies her curly golden hair."
Then I reached my hand to touch you,
But, oh dear! you were not there.

I felt so sad and lonely,
That I cried, but all in vain;
So to see if I could find you,
I went off to sleep again.

Now, fancy! In the morning
There you were, all safe and right;
And nurse said, "Here's poor dolly
Been upon the floor all night!"

Your pretty curls were tangled,
That were nice and smooth before;
So promise, dolly darling,
You will tumble out no more.

ELLIS WALTON.

HOW JACK BECAME A HERO.

AN IRISH STORY.

IT was a chilly April day, and everything was so quiet in Mr. Daly's farmyard that you might have thought no living creature was there except the pigs and chickens. But two boys sat up in a cosy nest in the great hay-rick, where they always came to talk about anything important, and their faces were very grave.

"Something is wrong," said Jack decidedly. "Father looks so worried and mother has been crying."

"Yes," answered Willie; "and I notice that none of the labourers—not even James—have come to work to-day."

"Annie will be able to tell us what is the matter," Jack went on. "I am sure she knows all about it."

As he spoke a little girl climbed up beside them, and nestled down against the sweet-smelling wall of hay.

"Oh, boys!" she cried, breathless, "we are Boycotted! Jane told me so, and she has gone home already."

They looked at each other with horrified faces. English children will hardly understand what Annie meant, but these were Irish boys, and they knew the plan which Irish tenants had made to force their landlords to do just as they wished, and which had been called after Captain Boycott, who had first suffered from it.

The name of the gentleman whom they wished to punish was generally settled at one of their Land League meetings, and then someone went round by night fastening up notices in conspicuous places, which forbade everyone to work for the "tyrant," or sell to him, or in fact to have anything to say to him, until he let his tenants have their own way; and threatening terrible punishments if this order was not obeyed.

These threats had been so often fulfilled, that even people who loved their kind master dared not so much as speak to him after reading these notices.

Now Mr. Daly had been obliged, sorely against his will, to turn some bad idle men out of their farms, and this had made them so angry that they had persuaded the leaders of the Land League to command that he should be Boycotted as a punishment.

"Oh!" said Jack, drawing a long breath.

"Who will take care of the horses now James has gone?"

"And who will milk the cows?" added Willie.

"And what shall we do for food?" asked Annie. "Jane said that neither the butcher nor the baker would send their carts round any longer."

"We shall have to do everything ourselves," said Willie. "Let us go and talk to Judy about it all."

It was a bright thought; they all scrambled from their perch, and ran down to the Lodge House, where their old nurse lived with her son Pat, Mr. Daly's herdsman.

The children found her just drawing her shawl over her white cap, ready to start for the Hall.

"I'm goin' up straight to the poor mistress, dears," she said. "She will want old Judy now her fine young servants have been frightened away; and Pat will never leave you either, so keep up your hearts, and we'll get through the trouble somehow."

"But will not Pat be afraid to work?" asked Jack anxiously. "The Land Leaguers might come in here and beat him when he is alone at night."

"I will make up a bed for him in the kitchen at the Hall, and we will all keep close together," said Judy cheerily.

"We can all work," said Jack bravely. "You know how well I can dig, Judy, and Willie here is able to groom his pony."

"You'll have enough to do without digging, my poor dear; the potatoes must wait awhile," she added, smiling; and then she locked the door, and they all went up to the Hall together.

Mrs. Daly was very delicate and very nervous, but for the children's sake she tried not to show how great was her fear. Mr. Daly had not thought things would be so bad, or he would have sent her away long ago, and now she refused to leave him; so the only thing to be done was to write for help, and get some of those brave labourers called Emergency Men, who would do the work on the farm until better times came.

But how should he get his letter to the post? Jonestown was four miles off, and there was no one to send, for Pat knew that he would be caught and beaten if he dared to show himself thus openly disobeying the orders of the Boycotters.

Mr. Daly would have gone himself, but his wife implored him not to run such a risk, and he could not leave her.

"I'll go, father," said Jack; "I am not a bit afraid, for the people all like me; and Scamp will carry me to Jonestown in no time."

"I don't like to let you, my boy, yet I must get these letters posted; they *could* not hurt a child like you."

So Jack pleaded until Mr. Daly gave an unwilling assent to his going. They went into the stable together and saddled Scamp; then Jack took the parcel, and cantered away merrily. He felt as if he were a soldier carrying dispatches through an enemy's camp, and a proud sense of importance filled his heart; all the stories he had read about dangerous messages came into his mind, and he felt for his letters to make sure of their safety.

No, they were not in his pocket, and at first he was frightened; but presently he found that the pocket was torn, and the letters had slipped down into the lining of his coat. "Well, they were quite safe there, and hidden too," he thought, "if anyone tried to get them from him."

At first there seemed no danger, and he began to feel disappointed that it was such an ordinary ride, but about a mile from Jonestown there was a long stretch of lonely road across a bog, bordered by dark fir-trees, and Jack put Scamp to his quickest pace, that he might get over it as fast as possible.

All at once the little pony shied at something, and began to back and snort as if frightened, and two men with something over their faces jumped up from behind a bank, and caught Scamp's bridle.

"It was cowardly of Daly to send this little chap; we should have had him safe if he had come himself," muttered one of the men; and Jack shivered as he thought that they must have been lying in wait to shoot his father.

"Please let me go," he cried. "Why do you hold the pony?"

"Not so fast, my master. First give us your letters, and then you may be off; you need not

deny that you have a message to the post, for we know better."

"I don't deny anything," replied Jack boldly, "but I will give you nothing; you are bad men."

"We must search him," they said one to the other, "if we don't want police and Emergency Men coming to help Daly to tyrannise"; and the pony was led away into the bog to a hidden spot where no eye could see. But they found nothing, though Jack's pockets, and even his boots and hat, were examined, and the men began to grow impatient at the delay. "Come now, this won't do," said one at last; "you must give up your letters. Don't you know how easily we could drown you in the bog water, and no one would ever hear of you again? Hand them over at once, like a good boy, and don't keep us waiting."

But Jack's bright eyes were full of courage; he felt like a real hero now, when such danger was threatened. I do not believe the men really meant to hurt him, only to frighten him, for the Irish have very soft hearts after all; but how could he know that?

"You may kill me if you like," he cried, "but you shall never get me to give up my message."

There was a little sob in his voice as he thought of his mother, and one of the men seemed touched.

"We can make nothing of him," he whispered to his companion. "I don't think he has any letters, for, if he had, where could they be hidden?"

"I don't know," said the other; "but we can't let him go now: he would tell the police of us."

But while they spoke Jack had seized the opportunity of their attention being turned away. With a sudden movement he jerked Scamp's bridle from their hands, sprang on the pony's back, and was galloping across the bog before they had understood what had happened.

Oh, how frightened Scamp did go!—faster than ever in his life before; and the men thought their best plan was to get away from the place where Jack had seen them, lest he should bring the police.

The boy galloped on to Jonestown and posted his letters safely, and then turned to go home again, but he felt weak and sick now from the great strain which he had borne, and he was very thankful indeed when a friend of his father's—Dr. Mayne—pulled up his car beside him.

"Hullo, Jack!" he cried; "what is this I hear about your father? Jump up and drive with me: we can tie the pony behind; and as I am going your way, you can tell me all the news."

The boy did as he was asked, and told his friend about the Boycotting, but he did not speak of his adventure to anyone, lest his mother should be frightened, until he was once more up in the council chamber in the hay-rick. Willie and Annie heard all about it, and listened with eager admiring eyes.

"I know one of the men by his voice: it was Jim Kelly," said Jack; "and I mean to tell him so. It must have been the other man's fault, for Jim would never wish to hurt papa."

So next day Jack and Willie went together to the farm-house where Kelly worked, and let him know that he was discovered. "I have not told anyone about you," said Jack; "and I will not let the police know, if you promise not to do anything against father again. He means to be kind to everyone, and people do not understand him."

Kelly was ashamed and frightened; besides, he admired Jack's courage, feeling how easily he himself had been led into sin by his fears, so the promise was given.

I think Kelly must have tried to show the people that Mr. Daly was not a tyrant, but a just kind landlord; or perhaps they saw how foolish it was to be his enemies because of his having to punish a few bad men; for the Boycotting did not last long, and when Mr. Daly had helped the tenants who had been turned out to go to America and begin a new life there, things settled down peacefully again.

But Mrs. Daly will never forget how bravely her eldest boy did his part in the time of trial, and what good little helpers Annie and Willie proved themselves to be. It was not until some time after that Jack told his story, and then he had learned not to think of himself as a hero, but only a boy who tried to do his duty and not to be afraid.

C. Maud Battersby.

LITTLE BLUE BIRD.

LITTLE blue bird on the autumn bough,
Have you never a thought of fear?
For the summer days have vanished now,
And the wild white winter will soon be here.

Little blue bird, when the storm winds blow,
And the world lies dark and cold and dead,
Bird of the sunshine, where do you go,
Where do you hide your pretty head?

Do you follow the swallows far and free,
Winging o'er hill and sea and plain,
To the citron woods of Sicily,
Or a warm green nest in the groves of Spain?

Little blue bird, where'er you roam,
When the long white winter is past and o'er,
We know you'll be seen, when the green months come,
Back in our English dales once more.

ROBERT RICHARDSON.

TO SCHOOL AND AWAY.

By H. ATTERIDGE, *Author of "Bunty and the Boys," "Uncle Silvio's Secret," &c.*

CHAPTER VII.—THE JOYS OF FREEDOM.

THE runaways had reached London. Gerald was rather dazed by the crowds, the noisy streets, the traffic on the great bridge across the Thames.

A holiday gaiety took possession of the boys. It was fun! They would go shopping in the Strand.

Gerald bought fruit and American candies; but Victor Maine had other tastes. He bought a top-hat, small, elegant, and shiny, and told the shopman he might have "that old cap." At another shop he got kid gloves and a bright blue tie with a silvery pattern. A light little cane with a silver top was his next purchase. Then he felt quite grown-up, and thought Gerald "a mere boy"

"But where are we going?" said the "mere boy," who was eating candy, and sharing it freely.

"To the hotel."

"But you have spent such a heap."

"The bill can go to my grandfather," answered Victor Maine.

But what a surprise he got when he walked into an hotel, and ordered "chops and tea—and we are going to stay here!"

"Luggage, sir? Where's your governor, sir?" said the waiter.

"It will be all right. My grandfather will pay the bill."

The waiter grinned.

"You'd better come back, sir, when your whiskers are grown. We don't put up any gentlemen here unless they pay for shaving water."

Two or three men standing by began to laugh, and Victor Maine came out angry, with his chin in the air.

"It is your fault," he said to Gerald; "you wouldn't buy a top-hat."

They tried another hotel.

"Where's your luggage, sir?"

"Oh!" said Gerald to Victor; "we should have brought a bag from school."

Victor frowned; but Gerald had blurted out the truth, and the waiter overheard him.

"Hope you won't get ketched, young gentlemen," was all he said, and shook his head, and held the door open as a hint that they were to go.

"Why didn't you hold your tongue?" Victor asked, when they were out in the street.

"It's no use," said Gerald. "Don't you see they won't have two boys like us at any hotel?"

Victor Maine was obliged to admit that this was the fact, though he grumbled that it was Gerald's fault.

They stood in the street, keeping away from every policeman. They were not quite sure whether a policeman could not arrest runaway schoolboys.

"I'll tell you what we shall do," said Victor. "I got the address of a jolly advertisement when we were in the train. Let's go to Signor Sol-fee-go!"

He told Gerald all about that advertisement as he hurried him along. It was "Wanted, Boys of Musical Talents. Easy work, and pay at once." Could anything be better? They both could sing. He himself had a beautiful tenor voice, he said, and if he "got on" he might soon be a singer at the Albert Hall Concerts.

"But I must go home," said Gerald. They had crossed Trafalgar Square, and were getting into St. Martin's Lane.

"Go home? oh, nonsense! Let us go and see the musical gentleman first. Think of Dick Whittington."

"He hadn't musical what-you-call-'em's, had he?"

"No, you gander! But he made his fortune."

The shops for birds and rabbits kept the boys a long time. They reached Holborn at last, and then found the address in a street close by. If they asked their way, it was of other boys. They had a sort of fear that a policeman might read their whole story in their faces.

Here they were at last. Surely the musical gentleman did not live at this tobacco-shop!

"It must be a mistake, but I'll ask," said Victor Maine; "they may know where he lives."

"What's his name? Sol-fee-go?" said Gerald.

A bearded man as black as night was coming down the three steps from the little shop.

"No, my boy," he said. "It's not Sol-fee-go, it is Solfeggio. But I'm your man. You've seen my advertisement, have you?"

He did not live there, but he had called to ask if there were any letters; and here he had just found the "boys of musical talents" talking about him as he came out.

"Where do you live, my lad? where is the governor—the two governors? You are not brothers."

They looked at each other.

"Ah! I see," said he; "you are doing business on your own account. Where do you go to school?"

Even Victor Maine became confused. Gerald looked scared.

"We only came to town to-day," said Victor.

"We—are—not going to school any more," Gerald stammered.

"Oh, I understand," said the dark man. He guessed their secret in a moment. "Never mind, my boys. The finest lad I ever knew ran away from school; he became a Bombay merchant, and rode on an elephant."

This was very encouraging, but his appearance was not. His clothes were shabby, his coat tightened about him and buttoned up, as if he had no white linen to show. The edge of a red handkerchief appeared round his neck. His hat was of the shape that Victor Maine admired, but it was rough and old. His black hairy face seemed never to have been washed, and his grizzled beard never to have been trimmed. His hands were brown and hairy, and strong as iron, as the boys felt when he took each by the arm.

He hailed a passing hansom by a shout, gave an order to the driver, and pushed the boys up into it before him. Gerald had to squeeze in between the signor and Victor. He was so anxious he could not enjoy the delights of a hansom or watch the trot of the horse; besides, he was sneezing all the time—there was so much snuff on Signor Solfeggio's clothes.

It was growing dusk, and the streets were lighted as they drove on ; the shop fronts shone with gas ; or from the largest the electric light blazed out white upon the passing crowds.

The hansom stopped at a restaurant. The shabby signor took the boys in, and gave them an excellent dinner of six courses and dessert. He said he wished to make their acquaintance and to talk of their musical talents. He paid for the dinner by changing a bank-note. The boys thought he was a very rich man.

Before dinner was over he had learned that they both sang, that Victor had a fine tenor voice, and hoped to sing in the Albert Hall. Victor Maine said he would like good pay and not much to do, because he wanted to enjoy himself.

"Just so!" said the signor.

"And I wouldn't mind learning to sing," said Gerald ; "I'd like that. But I shall have to go home soon. I am only having holidays."

"Precisely," said the musical gentleman, who was most pleasant and agreeable—although he didn't look it.

When they came out, the streets were quite dark, except for the blaze of gas, and sometimes electric light. Their new friend whistled through his fingers. A hansom dashed up. Again he got in with the boys ; and again Gerald was squeezed into the middle, and sneezed all the time, because the great musician had so much snuff on his clothes.

"Get out here," he said at last. The hansom was stopping, but not before any house. "We can walk the rest of the way."

They turned down narrow streets. It was a dismal part of the town, with ragged boys shrieking and playing, and men smoking in their shirt-sleeves, and untidy women standing in knots under the lamp-posts.

The street became more quiet farther on. The man stopped suddenly at a closed shop—a dark little shop, with the door open and no light within.

"Thank you, sir ; we are not coming in," said Victor ; and Gerald tried to draw back.

"In you go! What are you afraid of?" said the man. His iron hands had each by an arm, and in they were forced to go. The door was banged and locked behind them.

Candle-light glimmered from a room behind the dark shop.

"Go along in!" said the man. "Where are you, Gemma? Here are two young gentlemen come to see you."

Then he broke out in angry mutterings. There was no one in the back room ; Gemma—whoever she might be—was not there.

He stamped his foot ; he thundered—"The idle, good-for-nothing thing! where is she?" Then seeing the boys' faces, he quieted down, and said, "I am the best-humoured fellow in the world : I love boys ; but Gemma is my girl, and one must shout at her. I'll fetch her in quick enough!"

He went out.

"Let us run away," said Victor Maine. "I don't like this hole. Wait till he is clear of the door, and then we'll cut and run."

"I am not clear of the door yet," roared a voice. "Is that the way you thank me for my hospitality?" And there was Signor Solfeggio in the distance between them and the light of the entrance. He had not quite closed the door, and he had been listening. Then he actually went ; for they heard the door bang.

"Wasn't that awful? I'll go now, all the same," said Victor.

"I shan't," said Gerald : "not if he is going to hammer that girl when he gets her. I'll stand my ground for a bit."

"I won't," said Victor ; and he went feeling his way out through the dark shop.

Suddenly Gerald heard a shriek, a struggle.

"Help! help!" shouted Victor.

Gerald snatched the candle from the table, and ran out into the shop.

There was Victor staggering and shouting, with a monkey holding him round the neck.

It was really no wonder that he had cried out, nearly mad with fright, when all in the dark the monkey jumped down on him off the shelf as he passed through the shop.

He was still gasping, and trying to shake off the monkey, when there was the noise of a key in the door—proving that it had been carefully locked—and in came Signor Solfeggio, dragging

a pretty little Italian girl after him. In her disengaged hand the poor child held a jug of milk, and she was trying to keep it without spilling, while her tears were rolling down upon her white sleeves and red dress.

"So you *will* go gadding about!" he was saying to her harshly. Then he saw the monkey holding the boy by the head. "Hi, Toto! Let go! Get away!"

The monkey sprang away at his voice, and rattled off up to the shelf, in fear.

"I only ran out for the milk," cried the child. "*Perdonatemi*"—which was a cry for pardon. "Milk! it was the milk!"

"Oh, I say, don't cry like that," said Gerald, running to the rescue, and leading her away from the angry man. Then he took courage to look up at the signor. "You won't say anything to her, will you? I'll not sing or anything, if you do."

The poor child set down the jug, and wiped her tears away with her sleeve. She had a red skirt, a black bodice with a white kerchief stuffed into it, and a necklace and earrings.

"You are not afraid of me," said the gruff man. "She is not afraid! Are you, Gemma? Your dear, kind papa!"

She did not answer except by the troubled breath of smothered weeping. The man held her fast. It seemed to the boys that he pinched her to make her answer as he wanted, for she gave a little jump and a screech, and said—"No—not afraid, *pa-pa mio*."

"She knows how kind I am to her, don't you, Gemma?"

There was a pause. Her breast heaved, and there were sad little sniffs behind her sleeve. Another little squeak and jump, "Oh!—yes—kind—yes!"

"And Gemma knows I make boys and girls happy. Eh, Gemma, don't I?"

"Oh, yes!" the poor child hurried to say, avoiding the cause of the jump and squeak.

Then the man let go her arm. She rubbed it for a moment, and ceased crying, and carried the milk-jug into the back room. The signor himself brought the candle, and told the boys to sit down, and Gemma would make coffee.

She was not clever, poor little creature! But she seemed to be used to having to work, and she set about it in a determined way, as if, no matter how slow or awkward she was, she would get through it somehow.

First she took from a corner a big pinafore with sleeves, all made of cotton print, which by this time was of a colour between lilac, brown, and black. With this she covered herself, all but the head and hands. It was so long, and she was so small, that she sometimes tripped on it, and nearly tumbled.

Everything was in frightful disorder. The family washing was being done in a pudding-dish on one side of the table; the coffee-pot was standing in a tray of potatoes, and for want of room anywhere else, the bread and butter was on the top of—what? Yes—it *was* a hurdy-gurdy of the old-fashioned, upright, oblong kind, standing propped in the corner on its one long wooden leg.

Down on this scene of confusion a dusty clock looked, going wrong, of course, and told them it was half-past two. Green birds in a cage twittered faintly and cuddled together to sleep, high up in a corner. The top of the cage was used as a store-place for macaroni in heaps of strings; and there was a rope of onions hanging from the ceiling, up to which the monkey climbed when he dared to come in. You will have a nice idea of the comforts of home in Signor Solfeggio's house if you try to imagine all this; and on the empty fire-grate, think of the oil-stove set burning to boil the kettle, and the soot and oil-smoke going all over the place.

"I think we had better go now," said Gerald.

"Oh yes—getting late," said Victor Maine, standing up and putting his hand to his watch pocket. "Why, I haven't got it—my watch is gone. I say, Gerald, my pocket has been picked."

Gerald cried out—"Mine is gone too!"

And Victor added more bad news. "Why, I have not my purse—everything is gone. Oh, Signor Solfeggio, we have been robbed!"

"I say," said Victor, "let us run out at once and ask a policeman."

"You had better not; better lose your watch than do that, my boy," said the man.

"Why not?"

"Young gentlemen that run away from school had better keep clear of the police. Which

would you rather: spend the night with me or in prison?"

"But my watch," cried Gerald; "my father gave it to me."

"Well, how can I find the watch if you are silly enough to get it picked away in the street? Were not you looking in at any windows to-day?"

Oh yes, they were: they remembered that.

"You see, Jerry," said Victor, "you *would* stop at all the shops where the pigeons were."

Poor Gerald—between the loss of his watch, the sooty smoky air, the miserable room, the unknown man, and the lateness of the hour, he felt quite broken down and ready to cry.

"We can't stop!" said Victor.

"But where are you going, without any money? It's not that hour, my lads; that clock is always wrong."

The man groped in his breast pocket; the boys thought they heard *watches knocking together;* but the one he took out was a thick silver one, a "turnip," and he showed them that it was ten minutes to eleven. Still, that hour seemed terribly late for the boys to be out, homeless, without friends or money, and in such a wretched place.

"Well, I'll tell you what, my lads," said Signor Solfeggio, standing up with his back to the door: "I want to bring you out in the musical world. You tell me you have voices. I mean to make use of your musical talents: you will get heaps of money. But if you attempt to run away from me, if you don't stop with me as quiet as lambs, I'll give you to the first policeman I see, and I'll tell him you ran away from school. How would you like to go to prison, eh? You wouldn't. Very well. Then be thankful for hot coffee. There are your cups. Hand mine, Gemma girl; and mind you don't cut the bread too thin: it takes too much butter."

"Might we have the window open?" Gerald asked faintly. "The stove smokes; it is so hot."

"No, you can't," said Signor Solfeggio. "The monkey might run out."

So they had to stay there to smother; they drank off their coffee in fear of him, and crammed down thick bread and salt butter, though they were not in the least hungry after that excellent dinner which he had given to them, very much as the bit of cheese is given to the poor mouse going into the trap.

Only for a minute did the signor leave the boys and girl alone, when he went up the narrow creaking stairs to see if all was ready for the night.

"He wish—three weeks—find music boys; bed ready three weeks," said Gemma in a whisper, while the monkey came springing down into her arms.

The monkey was a great attraction for Gerald. Victor was afraid of it.

"It loves me," she said. "I love Toto and the birds. Toto sleep on my feet. We sleep under the music," pointing to the hurdy-gurdy.

There was indeed a little mattress and a coloured patchwork quilt on the floor there, in such a position that it seemed as if the hurdy-gurdy, if it tumbled, would crush Gemma, the monkey, and all.

"Is that man your father?" Gerald asked.

She shook her head, and looked frightened.

"My father Italian—dead. My mother Italian, marry other father, and die. She cried to leave me to him—but die. He call Solfeggio. Solfeggio my name. He Jobbins."

The boys exchanged glances. It was Mr. Jobbins, the stepfather of poor pretty little Gemma, who was gone upstairs to prepare the couch for the prisoners.

"You stay," whispered Gemma, laying a coaxing little hand on Gerald's arm, while he petted the monkey. "You stay. Me let you go—some time—when I can. Stay! I am not happy—you so good. Oh! *grazie, grazie,* thanks! thanks!"

"We shall have to stay for a bit, anyhow; there is no getting out," said Victor.

Down the steep stairs came the heavy step. The boys were sent away up, and told to sleep well.

It was a relief to go upstairs out of the smell of soot, snuff, and oil, and to be able to open the window.

They were afraid not to go to bed. Poor Gerald at least prayed from his heart.

"Victor," he said, rising up, "I wish I hadn't been disobedient. That's how all this

IN QUEER QUARTERS. (*See p.* 223.)

happened to me. I wish—I wish—I'd done—as my father said!"

"Don't give way, old fellow," said the other, for in the dark he knew that Gerald was crying, quite broken down at last. "We shall run away in the morning."

CHAPTER VIII.—GOING TO THE SEASIDE.

GERALD was too excited to sleep until dawn was bright. Then he had a frightful dream.

He dreamt that he was at school, and the boys had begun to tease and worry him, as Victor had foretold they would, and as, in fact, they had never done.

No, it was not at school that he suffered as the victim of cruel tricks, but when he ran away from happy Applewich Court.

Here, now, in his dream somebody had him by the head. He shrieked, and woke both Victor and himself.

"Time to get up!" said Signor Solfeggio. "We are off to the seaside."

The man seemed to be ready himself, even to his shabby old hat, and a leather bag fastened to his side by a strap over the shoulder. But why had he a bottle in one hand and a black sponge in the other? And why did he wake Gerald by shaking him by the head?

"Here are clothes for you," he said. "I have sold the others; that elegant tip-top sort of thing was no use for boys' wear at the seaside. Be down in three minutes, or I'll come for you."

When he was gone, Victor and Gerald had to array themselves in clothes that made them look like two young organ-grinders. Great was their disgust, their anger, their grumbling. They muttered to each other, with cautious looks towards the stairs, that old Solfeggio was a regular thief. Gerald remembered that he thought Mr. Peters a cruel tyrant. But how gladly would he have run back now, even to Mr. Peters! *Now* they knew what a tyrant meant.

Feeling grimy and miserable, hot and angry, they went downstairs.

"I say," began Victor, trying to screw up courage to rebel, "we *can't* stay with you. And we must have our own clothes, instead of these horrid old greeny-brown things."

To this Signor Solfeggio answered by a shout, a glaring of his eyes, a flying out of his big brawny fists, as if he meant to knock his prisoners, as boys say, into the middle of next week. They quaked, and were silent.

"Kurrr—rrrup!" growled the musical gentleman in a sort of war-whoop. "If you talk like that to me again——" He left the threat, awful and unfinished, and shook his black hairy head, and glared his eyes at them.

Gemma too—poor little Gemma—was asking them to be patient and quiet; but her asking was done in another way. She had got behind the man, out of his sight, but where the boys could see her; and she was putting her little hands together, and entreating them by looks and signs not to rouse his anger.

Her appearance—like their own—was changed to-day. Instead of her gay Italian peasant costume, she wore a poor black dress and a black straw hat with the crown ready to fly away from the brim.

She had breakfast ready—bread and coffee again, the bread stale, the coffee full of dust, and the smoke of the oil-stove everywhere. What a change from Applewich Court! They thought with longing of the handsome dining-hall, with everything good, everyone cheerful, and the sunny garden outside the windows.

The little green birds were being fed by Gemma, when the man told her he was going to sell them. She cried bitterly, and Gerald begged in vain that they should be left to her. It was all of no use. Off went the man with the cage, and locked the door after him.

"He goes out for breakfast, for dinner, for everything," said Gemma. "Look here. He does not know I saw it; but I know."

She still munched her piece of bread, and drew Gerald into a corner, where down in the floor there was a loose board. This board she lifted, and put her hand into a deep hole.

"I can't reach it," she said. "Sack—money—little sack—great money. Ah! it is not there to-day: he take it away. He had more

little sack—up—upstairs—in the chimney—I don't know where—he knows."

Then she put down the board into its place in a hurry. "Don't tell, or he kill us all."

"He couldn't kill you, if I was by," said Gerald, straightening himself and puffing out his chest. "Don't be afraid of him. It's all right when there's a man in the house."

Victor Maine's voice, calling from somewhere outside, made him turn round. While they were talking about the board, Victor had been looking for a way of escape; and thinking only of himself, he had opened the back window and begun to scale the yard wall before he thought of calling to Gerald.

"Come along, Jerry; I'm off!"

Gerald turned to the poor little dark-eyed girl, who looked up at him so confidingly from under her curls and her broken hat.

"I'll come back and rescue you," he said. And he felt like a knight, or a crusader, or something very grand indeed. "But I can't wait now!"

And he rushed to the open window.

The little Italian girl burst into tears; but seeing the window open, she cried to him unselfishly, "Run, run, *caro*—my dear—run, run!"

"Stop! Kurrr—rrup! If you run away from *me!*" roared the voice of the man, who came dashing in through the shop just in time to catch Gerald by the legs.

Victor Maine had escaped to a distance of six houses, and stood calmly on the wall, and saw the capture.

Then Gerald was pulled in, and the window was shut down, and Victor Maine was gone—Victor, his friend, who had led him into mischief first, then away from school—Victor, who saw this man's advertisement, who, in fact, led poor Gerald at every step astray. Now he was gone, free, and he had left Gerald in the lurch.

If ever a boy's hair stood on end with fright, this boy's did when the man caught him and pulled him in at the window again. He held Gerald by the shoulders, and told him the only question was whether he would "make him sing out" this minute, or go round the corner with him to the police. As a sample of making him "sing out," he boxed poor Gerald's ears without mercy, and asked him whether he would like to go to prison for running away from school.

Gerald did not know that the man was deceiving him: that if only he could say a word to a policeman he would be saved from all his miseries and sent safely home. And either home or Applewich Court seemed to him now to be a place of rest, and kindness, too good for him ever to reach again.

He did not for a moment doubt that the man's cruel threat was true. It was enough to be clutched by the iron hands of the tyrant, and even to be struck, but to be given to the police and put in prison seemed worse to the boy. So he only gave one cry, when he felt his head nearly knocked off; and the thought of his masters at Applewich Court flashed upon him—his masters whom the other boys said were so just, and whom they seemed to love. Why, if he could have got to the doctor's study now, he would have rushed in, and thrown himself into Doctor Grindham's arms for protection.

Gemma came to the rescue so faithfully that she nearly pulled Signor Solfeggio's coat to pieces. And Toto was a still better friend. For the tyrant suddenly exclaimed, "How dare you open the window? There's the monkey gone out!" And they saw that Toto was hanging from the wall of the yard, twisting his tail.

In a moment the window was up again, and the signor was out to get him in. The monkey waited for him as a frightened mouse sometimes lies still and waits for a cat. However, Toto got off better than the boy, for his ears were not boxed, neither was he threatened with being given to the policeman.

Peace was restored. Gerald felt now that he was a prisoner indeed. Taking a few bags, the hurdy-gurdy, and the monkey in a cage, they all went out into a cab, and drove a long distance to the railway station. The monkey and the hurdy-gurdy went in the luggage-van; the others went among an excursion crowd off to the seaside.

Gemma and Gerald kept together near a window. Anyhow, there was something of freedom about going away to the sea; and hope rose in his heart.

"Where are we going to?" he whispered to Gemma.

"Don't know," said Gemma.

Neither of them liked to ask.

"My sisters are at school at the seaside," began Gerald again.

"Your sisters! That was your brother—gone over the wall," said Gemma, with her foreign accent and her broken words.

"Hush!" said the man, looking at them sharply. They had begun to attract attention from the other people, and whenever they began to talk after that he "looked daggers" at them.

After a long journey, they got out at a large station amid great noise and confusion.

"I wonder what place it is?" said Gerald to his little companion.

She looked round with those gentle dark eyes. "Is it that name—the yellow board? We have come to Mustard; it is Mustard."

Gerald smiled—the first smile for a long time.

"Hush!" said the man again. "You two stand together while I get out the luggage."

The monkey-cage and the hurdy-gurdy were waiting for them, thrown out on the platform among the rushing crowds.

Gemma took the monkey with an apron over his cage, the man carried the bags, and he ordered Gerald to carry the hurdy-gurdy. Gerald looked at it for a moment, then looked at the ladies near, prettily dressed, as his mother and sisters used to dress at home. It was a fashionable place; there were carriages and footmen outside the station. But he dared not disobey the man. He carried the hurdy-gurdy.

They went to a lodging, far cleaner and more comfortable than that den they had left in London. These two rooms were at the top of a house in a little street. They were neatly furnished, the walls were white; there were even pictures, vases, and mats of curly yellow and orange paper under china figures on the mantelpiece.

The man brought in a cold dinner from a shop, and Gerald ate with hunger.

"I'd like to go and look at the sea," he said. "Can't we go out to the beach after dinner—Gemma and I?"

"You will be out all day to-morrow," said the man; and there was something so hard in his voice that the boy dared not ask again. "Now you have eaten your dinner, what about the musical talents? You and the girl will spend this afternoon and evening in learning a very nice duet."

First he made them learn all the words by heart. Poor Gemma! She had never had any practice in learning lessons, and it was almost impossible for her to remember the five verses of the song. When the man was getting angry, Gerald tried to help her.

"You know everything," she said to Gerald, with great respect. "You are a gentleman." As if gentlemen knew everything! No doubt she thought so, just as little children think that grown-up people know all that is in books.

"Now," said their new and hard teacher, "you must both sing it."

It was a very doleful poem, and it rhymed badly. It was about "two poor orphan children, who found the world *bewilderin'*." And when Signor Solfeggio told them to sing it, Gerald asked—

"What's the tune?"

He said—"Oh! any tune."

So the little girl, who was always frightened when the man told her to do anything, began to sing it to no tune at all. And the boy struck up the first popular air that came into his head.

After a line of the medley, Gerald for a moment forgot all his troubles and burst out laughing. "It's like a cats' concert," he said; "it's awfully jolly!"

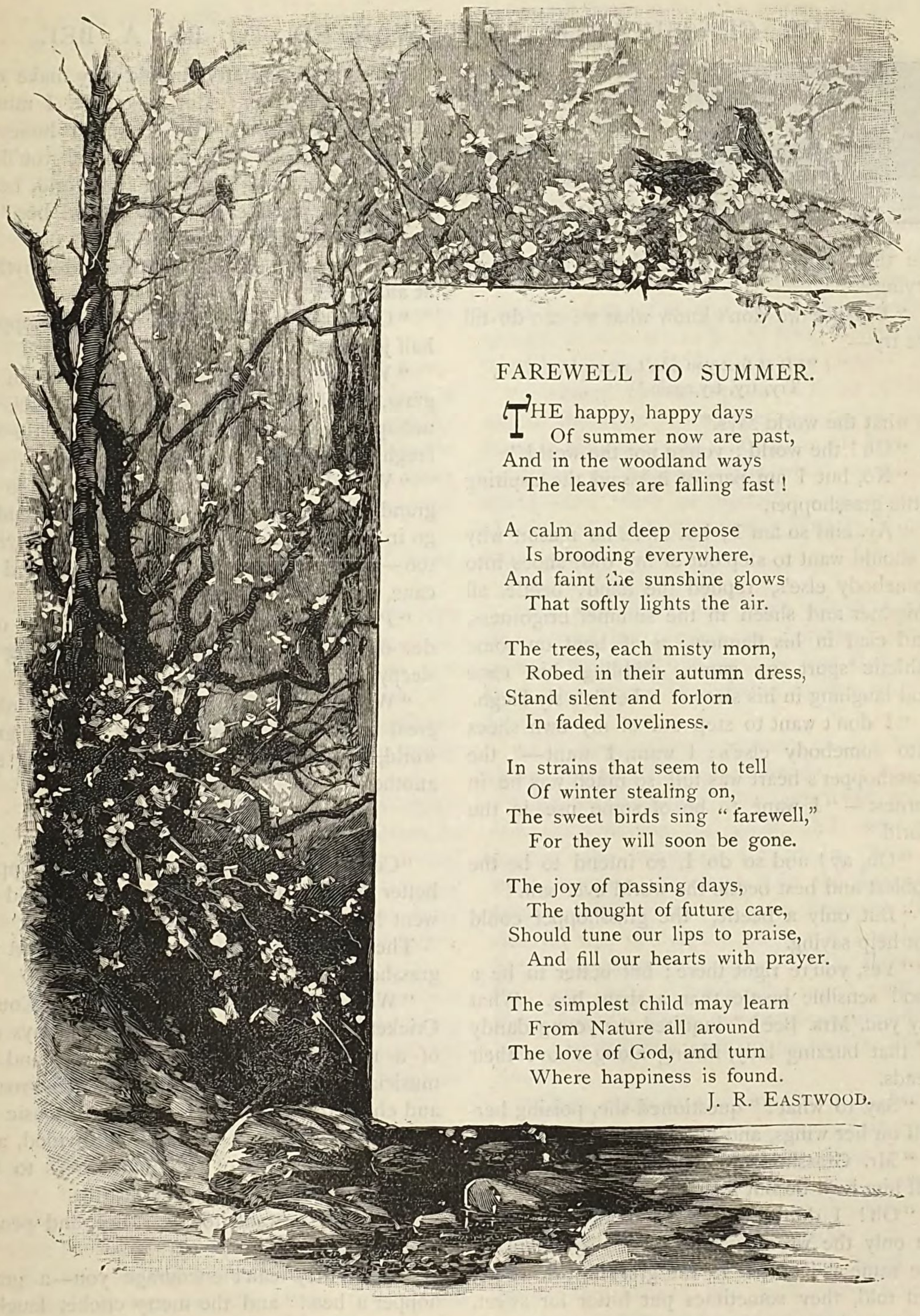
"I'll make you sing another tune," growled the man, seizing his stick from the corner. "Why, it is meant to be the song of two 'orflings,' and to be sad-like. Sing sad-like this minute, or I'll make you."

After this threat, Gerald struck up the tune of "Rule Britannia" sung in a slow wail, and Gemma, having the words quite frightened out of her head, sang with neither words nor tune, but with a good deal of musical sound.

"Now," said the man; "I have brought you to Brighton to make money. Musical talents! Easy employment! You will sing that song in the street to-morrow!"

"And this is Brighton!" thought Gerald in silent horror. "He wants me to sing in the street. Why, my sisters are here at school!"

(To be continued.)



FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

THE happy, happy days
Of summer now are past,
And in the woodland ways
The leaves are falling fast!

A calm and deep repose
Is brooding everywhere,
And faint the sunshine glows
That softly lights the air.

The trees, each misty morn,
Robed in their autumn dress,
Stand silent and forlorn
In faded loveliness.

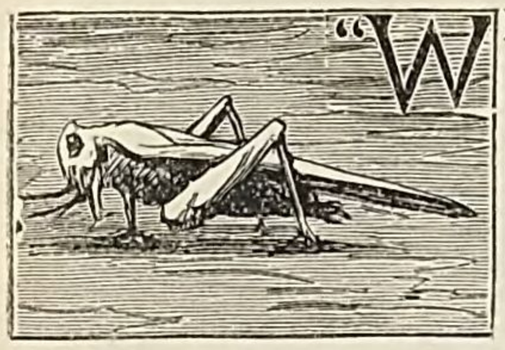
In strains that seem to tell
Of winter stealing on,
The sweet birds sing "farewell,"
For they will soon be gone.

The joy of passing days,
The thought of future care,
Should tune our lips to praise,
And fill our hearts with prayer.

The simplest child may learn
From Nature all around
The love of God, and turn
Where happiness is found.

J. R. EASTWOOD.

THE GRASSHOPPER THAT WANTED TO BE A BEE.



"WELL, Mr. Grasshopper, what may you be doing?"

"Trying to buzz like a bee: in fact, trying to be a bee."

"Oh, you'll never be that, you know; then where's the use of trying?"

"Because we don't know what we can do till we try—

"'If at first you don't succeed,
Try, try, try again,'

is what the world says."

"Oh! the world; you're not the world."

"No, but I am part of it," said the aspiring little grasshopper.

"Ay, and so am I; but that's no reason why I should want to step out of my own shoes into somebody else's," replied the dandy beetle, all shimmer and sheen in the summer brightness, and clad in his flannels, as if bent on some athletic sport or game, nibbling his cane and laughing in his sleeve: a beetle's sly laugh.

"I don't want to step out of my own shoes into somebody else's; I want, I want—" the grasshopper's heart was full, so much was he in earnest—"I want to be of some use in the world."

"Oh, ay! and so do I, so intend to be the noblest and best beetle the world ever saw."

"But only a beetle," the grasshopper could not help saying.

"Yes, you're right there; but better to be a good sensible beetle than a sham bee. What say you, Mrs. Bee?" inquired the young dandy of that buzzing lady, flitting along above their heads.

"Say to what?" questioned she, poising herself on her wings, and halting a moment.

"Mr. Grasshopper wants to be a bee, and I tell him he'll be but a sham one."

"Oh! I don't think he'd be quite that; he'd be only the wrong person in the wrong place, the same as it is out in the great world, where, I'm told, they sometimes put bitter for sweet, sweet for bitter, darkness for light, and light for darkness, and a pretty jumble they make of it in their ignorance. But, dear me, I mustn't stay here gossiping, with so much honey to gather! I hope, Mr. Grasshopper, you'll be and do something useful in the world, but I don't think you'll ever make a good bee"; so buzzed the bee, and was gone.

"Something useful. I can't be or do anything at all."

"Oh! you can be a little green grasshopper," half jeered the beetle.

"Yes, and chirp, and be hidden away in the grass," said the poor discontented morsel, too unhappy to heed or care that the beetle was laughing at him.

"Well, I must be going, for I'm off to the grand Beetle Race of the season, and intend to go in for the beautiful crystal cup, and to win it too—think of that!" and the beetle twirled his cane, and was moving on.

"Pooh! crystal cup—'tis only made of a dew-drop," said a drowsy centipede, lifting his sleepy head from the ground hard by.

"Well, what of that? we athletes think a great deal of it; and 'tis said by the great world, that's always racing after one thing and another,

"'——the glory lies
In the struggle, not the prize.'

"Come and see the contest, Mr. Grasshopper; better do that than try to be a bee." And off went Mr. Beetle helter-skelter.

The centipede dropped asleep again, and the grasshopper sighed.

"Well, why that sigh?" asked his Cousin Cricket, leaping by that way, as he always did of a morning. He was one of a band of musicians who stood at certain cross-roads, and cheered the passers-by with their music all summer-time, and in winter they divided, and went in companies of twos and threes to the houses, and performed on the hearths.

"Because I want to be a bee, and people discourage me."

"Well, they can't encourage you—a grasshopper a bee!" and the merry cricket laughed good-naturedly.

"Oh, ay, very well for you to laugh when you are living such a noble life."

"Oh! no more noble life than yours—mine a cricket's, yours a grasshopper's—where's the difference?"

"This difference: that nobody wants me. I may as well be out of the world."

"Well, I'd not think so meanly of myself. Think you're useless, and you will be useless," reasoned the sensible little cricket, opening his music-book, and humming a tune.

"But the best Book in the world says the grasshopper is a burden," said the heavy-hearted one.

"Oh yes, to old people, to whom so many things are burdens. The same Book tells of a man who cared not, he was so old, for singing men and singing women, but that's no reason why we shouldn't stick to our work, and make our mite of melody in the world," returned the cheery cricket.

"But what can I do for anybody? I know I'm a burden to myself, if not to others."

"Show the world how happy a grasshopper can be, living its humble life among the grass, and who knows how many heavy hearts you may cheer, even by your chirp?" So spoke the cricket, and as several of his fellow musicians now came up, he hopped on with them, tuning their instruments as they went.

"Oh, happy bees!" sighed the grasshopper, hearing them buzzing so contentedly above in the sunshine, among the flowers. "And I *will* be a bee. I'm sure I'd almost caught the very tone of their buzzing, when that pert beetle came and interrupted me; and," said the silly insect, "my long legs I can crook up so."

Oh! a funny little bundle he was, as he bent and cramped himself together, but not like a bee; though he leaped off to a brook near, and peered at himself in the water, to see what he was like.

"Oh yes, I'm not so much unlike a bee, and I'm sure I can buzz"; and buzzing—or what he called buzzing—half leaping, half letting the breeze bear him on, he made his way to the bee-hives in Widow Jones's garden.

He even managed to collect a little pollen on his long legs, but the honey sipping was beyond his powers as yet; so, entering one of the little palaces of neatness and industry, he sat himself down in a dusky corner, to await the home-coming of the busy workers.

Buzz-a-buzz, buzz-a-buzz, in they came in droves, and he, poor little grasshopper, kept his perch, and buzzed as well as he could in his shady corner with them. But, oh dear! they detected that counterfeit bee voice, and the queen-bee bade her courtiers seek and search out the enemy in the hive. They soon found him, and how he trembled, led by those two stern bee-courtiers before their sovereign, her sweet bee-face calm and dignified, as became royalty, as she sat to judge him, to hear him plead his cause. He had but one plea:—

"I wanted to be a bee, so as to be of some use in the world"; and the wise queen heard truth in his voice, read sincerity in his eyes.

"Then go back into the world—your own world—and there be useful"; so buzzed the Queen Bee, touching him with her sceptre as he humbly knelt before her.

"How?" he panted.

"He who placed you there will show you." She waved her sceptre and dismissed him; a courtly train led him out; he was at the hive door, the after-glow lighting up his sorrowful face.

As he stood there, a raindrop came splashing down, and took him by the hand.

"Mr. Grasshopper," she said, "will you go and chirp among the grass, and say we're coming: the raindrops are coming from the wind's treasury, the clouds? for the flowers are fainting, and saying we have forgotten them, and, for that matter, the whole world is heavy-hearted, because we've tarried till the right time. But say we're coming now soon; 'twill give them hope." Thus the raindrop admonished him, and led him well on his way to his old haunts.

"Chirp, chirp, chirp!" such a little, homely, simple thing to do, but oh! what a burst of joy greeted him as he chirped, yearning, longing, waiting. The flowers lifted up their drooping heads; they could not speak to thank him, but they tossed sweet perfume along his path as he went; and poor humble worms lifted their heads and blessed him with their voiceless tongues; toads and frogs croaked—

A DIFFICULT TASK. (*See p.* 233.)

"Oh, Mr. Grasshopper, what a noble work is yours, to whisper hope to thirsty ones!"

And an old cow lowed in rhyme—

"Thanks, wee mite, for saying so,
Rain will make the grass to grow."

More, the horses neighed, donkeys brayed, lambs and sheep bleated, till a mighty chorus rolled and rolled again. And, when there came a pause, the whirr, whirr of the corn in the upland fields made a sweet tuneful refrain. Nay, a human tongue blessed him, and the grasshopper's cup of joy seemed full.

"Grasshopper cry,
Rain nigh,"

quoth Farmer Dobbs, out regarding the weather. "Blessed little grasshopper! now I shall sleep in peace to-night, knowing my thirsty crops 'll have a drenching, for I never knew the sign to fail yet."

And anon the moon rose, darting, as it seemed, her first sweet glance on the little herald, lifting his head as well as he could above the grass, and piping his good news.

She also sent down a beam, pure and white, to whisper a secret to his inmost soul, which would abide with him for ever, and give him content. Nobody heard it, nobody knew it, save he himself, and the fair sweet messenger who brought it. But oh! how the hearing and receiving it transformed and beautified his face!

"Heigh-ho! who is making the world so glad?" It was Mr. Beetle, speeding home with his crystal prize cup—for he had won it—who put the question.

"Me," piped the ungrammatical little herald of good.

"Ha! this is better than being a sham bee. Why, it's nobler and better than winning the crystal cup at the race to-day, to hear this chorus of blessing, and to know that you deserve it," said the beetle good-naturedly.

"I don't deserve it," was the humble response; "I seem to have done nothing."

"Only your duty, your life work, you know." His Cousin Cricket whispered this to him, for he was near the cross-roads, where the musicians had paused to take breath.

But they were already about to strike up a new melody, and this was the refrain of it, which they played and sang—

"Duty is beauty, be what it may,
It brightens and gilds the homeliest way."

And all the voices of earth seemed to take it up, and echo it far and wide, till the rain came down, and the moon veiled her face, to hide her tears, thinking of the small aspirant, who had found his mission at last to be hopeful and cheerful, and to speak a word of hope and a good time coming to earth's fainting ones, athirst and weary. Humble work, which a child might do: speak a pleasant word, give a pleasant smile, a lowly herald of the bright to-morrow coming; but what would life be without it?

A DIFFICULT TASK.

WITH pouting lips, and clouded brow,
Meg pokes her needles in and out;
The tiresome yarn is in a snarl,
'Tis sad enough to cry about.

For she has tried so hard to learn,
And yet the stitches *will* drop through,
The needles *won't* go as they should.
What can the poor wee lassie do?

When sister Nell sits down to knit,
Her fingers move with wondrous speed;
Why cannot Meg do just the same?
'Tis really very hard indeed.

This morning, daddy pinched her chin,
Called her his bonny golden-locks,
And promised her a fine new shawl
If she would learn to knit his socks.

But such reward seems far away,
Till Nell, with tender word and kiss,
Draws her small sister to her side,
To find out what has gone amiss.

The little hands she gently guides,
The tangled web makes straight and plain,
Till smiles replace the puzzled frowns
And Meg is happy once again.

MABEL A. CLINTON.

THE DOLL THAT WAS A THIEF.

"MAMMA, may I give a dolls' party, and invite all the dolls I know to tea?" asked blue-eyed six-years-old Kitty Hamilton, her arms twined about her mother's neck the while.

"Yes, dear." Whenever do mammas say "No" to their little daughters when they can possibly say "Yes"?

"But when?" asked Mrs. Hamilton, as an after-thought.

"To-day, mamma—I think there will be time."

"Short notice," quoth Bob her brother, with a knowing whistle, when she imparted her scheme to him.

Now Bob was seven, and, though his sister's right hand in many things—she being the only girl in the family—she felt rather lonely at times, especially in any matter which concerned her dolls. Old Toby, the house-dog, and the Lady Jane Grey, her doll, were her real bosom friends. I cannot say how many joys and sorrows the three shared in common. Bob had called Kitty's new doll Lady Jane Grey, because, he said, it was a telling name; the history Lady Jane had lost her head, and there was no knowing what might happen to this mite of a nonsense one: the thought of which always made the wee mamma shiver. But about the party.

"And, Bob, you'll run round with the invitations, won't you?" she asked, in her most winning way, which way, as her big brother Ralph said, was enough to charm the heart out of a wheelbarrow, it was so irresistible.

So Bob said "All right! But, I say, are you going to do the thing in that tip-top style?"

"Yes; and I mean dolly to write the invitations herself—her and me," Kitty told him—no very decided notions had she as yet of rules in grammar.

"Why, what shams you both are!" laughed Bob, sitting astride a chair in the nursery, and waiting to see the fun of it.

Well, the two shams managed pretty well. Dolly inked her fingers a good deal before the task was over; a blotch or two of ink found its way on to her writing pinafore, which thoughtful Kitty arrayed her in; she also smudged her nose; but then, Kitty said that was excusable; she often did the same herself when writing her copy. So Bob only used once more his boyish phrase, "All right!" and stood waiting to depart on his mission. Funny little three-cornered notes were they—seven in all—the addresses very like as if a fly had dipped itself in ink, and scrawled and traced out the letters, so zig-zag were they. But Kitty said, "Never mind: dollies were not supposed to write *very* well." Then Bob took them, neatly put into Kitty's own flower basket, and vaulted away.

The Lady Jane looked supremely happy as Kitty tripped up and down the nursery floor, like a careful housewifely little lady, making ready for the entertainment of the afternoon. Just at three she had asked the guests to come.

"And I suppose the liliputian tea-things will be set out?" Bob asked, in big boy contempt.

"Yes; and my dolly's silver tea-service."

Oh! such a dear little silver teapot, cream-jug, and sugar-basin had Kitty—or what she called silver—her grandmamma's last Christmas present; tiny tea-spoons to match, and her china set, green and gold. Well, it was all brought out and arranged, with dishes of strawberries, an iced cake too large for dollies' eating—of which Bob was glad; then there were biscuits, honey, preserves—nice biscuits that could be eaten with sweeties, and the cream for the strawberries was just delicious! Yes, it was all set out on a monster stool, to accommodate her doll guests, the stool covered with a snowy cloth. Then came the dressing of the Lady Jane in snowy white, lilies of the valley in her hair—sham ones, as Bob said. Then Kitty was dressed, and she and Toby went out to the gate to watch.

They soon arrived—seven little girls, like seven dainty butterflies, bringing seven dolls as dainty as themselves. The Lady Jane received them with smiling hospitality, and led the way

to the tea-table, assisted by Kitty, and took her place at the tea-tray, Kitty kneeling behind her and pouring out tea, the other little girls every one kneeling behind her own dolly, while Bob sat near, tailor-fashion, on the floor, and feasted on cake, strawberries, and sweeties to his heart's content. Ah, well! the cake vanished, as did the strawberries and sweeties; even the sugar was all used up. As for the cream, Toby, who had not been invited, took French leave, and walked in, and while the small mammas were busy with their darlings, lapped up the cream to the last drop, even overturning the bowl in his anxiety not to leave any. And when Kitty cried—

"Oh, Toby, you thief! how could you! The Lady Jane would not do such a thing," he trotted up to his mistress, and licked her hand with the grace and ease of a courtier, even daring to lick the Lady Jane's cheek.

After tea, Bob invited them all to the garden, there to amuse themselves with a swing, he himself erecting one between two chairs in the nursery for the sham ladies' amusement, as he called them; crowding them all into the swing together, and setting them in motion to and fro, till the little girls screamed, half with laughter and half with fright, lest their darlings should come to grief.

"They'll do well enough," Bob assured them; so out they all swept, ready for the fun which awaited them. At last nurse came to call them; it was time for the little ladies to go home.

In they went. Oh, what romps those dollies had been having! There they lay, one upon the other, a most unladylike heap, upon the floor, the swing still in motion, as if inviting them to get up and mount for one more frolic.

But no; the small shocked mammas each one took her own child, and smoothed it into something like neatness, tying on hats or hoods, winding wraps and the like round dainty shoulders. Then Lily Blake set them all in a panic by crying—

"I've lost my Belinda's 'diamond' pin!"

Dear dear! such a seeking and searching ensued: a doll's "diamond" pin lost. The glittering bauble had been the envy of all the little girls that very afternoon, and now it was lost, and, what was more, could not be found.

"A doll's 'diamond' pin lost! whosoever will bring the same to the owner shall receive a farthing reward," cried Bob, running through the shadowy old garden tinkling a bell, like a regular town crier. But the birds twittered they had not found it; the bees, laden with their last load of honey, were hastening home, much too busy to think or care about diamond pins or farthings; the butterflies were having a last game with the sunbeams; and the sunbeams themselves flitted this way and that, smiling in sweet content, as they always do, let what will be lost or won. So nothing came of Bob's crying, and the little ladies waited within doors till they could wait no longer. There was no use in waiting; one and all prepared to go home.

"Dolly could not have worn her pin," suggested nurse.

But Lily was confident she had; so were they all, for hadn't they admired the bit of glittering glass as if it had been the real thing, and of the first quality, too? Nay, Lily went a step farther, and said someone must have stolen it.

At this, small hostess Kitty stood forward like a shocked daisy, and asked "Who?" But Lily would not say, only grew sulky, and walked out at the nursery door and away home, without bidding anyone "good-bye," not even allowing the little Belinda to wish Lady Jane "adieu," although she stood smiling and gracious at the door, and bowed as courtly a bow as Kitty could make her. No, this was the little rift in the lute of this otherwise delightful dolls' party; and Kitty, after it was all over, went to bed in tears.

"I'd not mind, dearie," said nurse, kissing her, and going belowstairs for a chat with cook.

But Kitty did mind: minded so much that she forgot to undress poor Lady Jane, and put her in her bed, so that she lay where nurse had put her, in all her party finery, and shivering in the cold for aught the little sorrowful, forgetful mamma knew.

The sun, too, was setting; his big red eye was spying and spying again, as Kitty thought, ere he sank behind the hill, as if he knew of the lost pin and fain would find it. And Kitty watching him, and musing out her own thoughts, remembered the golden old rule of not letting the sun go down on our wrath; and wrath meant anger, she knew. Well, perhaps she was

not angry with Lily, but her heart was very sore towards her, because of what she had said about the pin being stolen; and—well, she was almost sure Lily was angry with her, or she would not have gone out of the house so rudely and so sullenly, without one word of "good-bye," even making her little Belinda act as rudely as did she. The thought of Belinda brought a thought of the Lady Jane undressed and uncared for. She sprang out of bed: she would certainly make the poor darling comfortable for the night. The eye of the great kindly sun was still spying and seeking, and seemed to laugh as Kitty undressed dolly, as if he knew what was going to happen.

And what did happen? A hard substance was pushed up the Lady Jane's lace sleeve, a little hard thing that pricked as Kitty took it out—Lily's Belinda's "diamond" pin. And the Lady Jane was the thief who had stolen it.

"Oh, you naughty Lady Jane! if you do these things you may even lose your head, like the other Lady Jane, same as Bob said," cried Kitty, between laughing and crying; it was so very funny, so ludicrous, that the child laughed and laughed again.

Then she looked away at the sun. He was still lingering at the top of the hill. There might be time; Lily must know, and peace be made. It would be just like a beautiful story-book to make peace before the sun set. Deft-handed Kitty, how nimbly she dressed! she would run down all the way to Lily's.

Nurse was downstairs, she could not ask her; mamma had company, she could not ask her; so out she went, she and the Lady Jane; and Toby, catching sight of her, trotted along with her—'twould never do to let her go alone, thought Toby, with a wink of his old eyes. Lily's big brother answered Kitty's timid ring at the door.

"Lily?—she's gone to bed as grumpy as grumpy," he told her when she asked for her.

"But I think I could make her good-tempered—pleased, you know," piped the silvery tongue.

"Well, then, run up, all three of you, all up the stairs, first door to the right, that is the room," said he; so up they mounted, the funny trio, Lily's brother riding up and down the banisters, waiting for the report of her mission.

"Well," said he, as she came out presently, wiping her eyes, "has she been biting your head off?"

"No," laughed she; "but I've done it—I've made her pleased," tripping down the stairs, Toby, like a trusty knight, keeping close to her side.

"Well, good-night, Mistress Makepeace," so Lily's brother called after her as she trotted out and away.

It was a beautiful name he gave her, she thought, watching the sun drop behind the hill at last, and she and Toby marching along through the shadows. But about the stolen pin—how did it happen? Nurse said if Master Bob had no hand in the matter it must have slipped up the Lady Jane's sleeve when all the dolls tumbled out of the swing.

Bob denied having anything to do with the affair. "I never thought of it, or I would," was his assertion. "But I am glad the mystery is cleared up, and the Lady Jane not so black as she was painted. You see, the history Lady Jane was very like that."

ON THE LOOK-OUT!

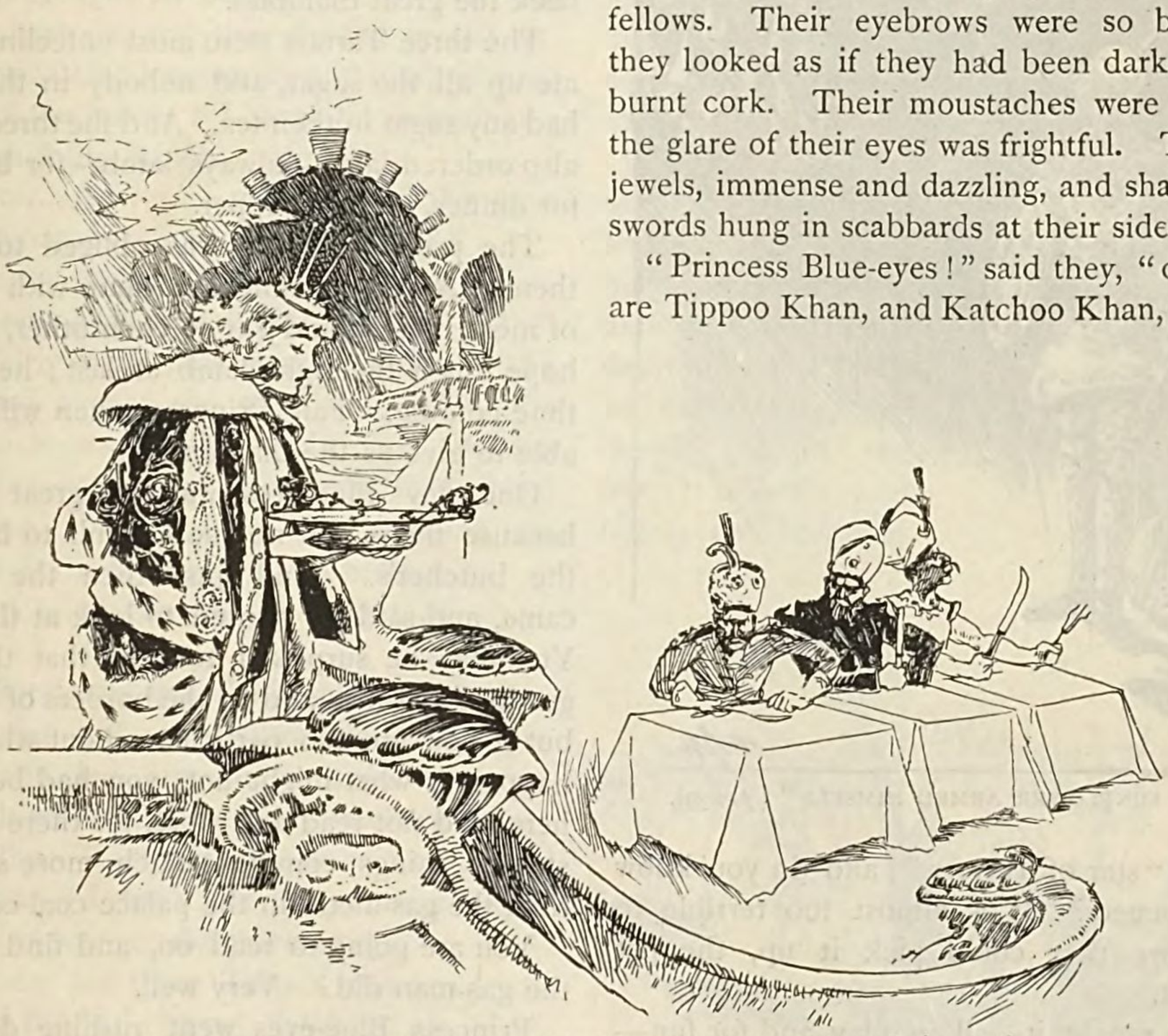
WHEN the sun said "good-bye" at the end of the day,
The rabbits stole out in the twilight to play;
From hole and from corner they crept thick and fast,
But one little rabbit was always the last.

With shy timid gaze he would cautiously peer
To see that no sign of a danger was near;
He missed some alarms which the others befell,
But often he lost half the frolic as well!

TARTARS THREE.

A FAIRY TALE.

ONCE upon a time there was a young princess; and one day when she was walking in the palace garden she heard a poor little lamb bleating in the fields beyond. This pretty little princess had no father or mother, and her only brother was gone to the wars; she was very lonely. And the poor little lamb out in the fields seemed to be very lonely too, so she opened the garden gate and went to look for it.



"THE PRINCESS HERSELF WAS OBLIGED TO WAIT ON THEM" (*p* 238).

The lamb was quite tired of crying "Bah-ah-ah!" and it was lost and hungry, and it came running to Princess Blue-eyes the moment she called. And the princess took it home to the palace, and fed it, and gave it a nice cushion to lie on by the fire. It became fond of her at once, and it was most beautiful and fat and white, and wore a silver chain for a collar, and it went jumping about the palace wherever it liked. In fact, Woolly-kins and Blue-eyes were very happy together until the Tartars came.

It happened just like this—Princess Blue-eyes was teaching the lamb to sit up, and Woolly-kins was always tumbling down again on to his white cushion with the gold tassels, when visitors were announced. And in came three Tartars. One Tartar would have been bad enough, but three of them——

They bowed low, almost till their turbans touched the floor. They were most terrible fellows. Their eyebrows were so black that they looked as if they had been darkened with burnt cork. Their moustaches were long, and the glare of their eyes was frightful. They wore jewels, immense and dazzling, and sharp curved swords hung in scabbards at their sides.

"Princess Blue-eyes!" said they, "our names are Tippoo Khan, and Katchoo Khan, and Ifyou Khan; and we want to know which of us you like best."

"Oh, I don't like any of you!" shrieked the princess, and covered her face with her hands.

"But we mean to carry you off to Tartary," said Tippoo Khan.

"One of us is going to marry you—whichever you like," said Katchoo Khan.

"And we are going to stay here until you choose," said Ifyou Khan.

Princess Blue-eyes screamed in terror.

And just then the biggest jewel fell out of the turban of Katchoo Khan—a great diamond

"PRINCE SUNFLOWER ARMED HIMSELF" (*p.* 239).

called the "star of Tartary"; and do you know what happened? It is almost too terrible to tell. Before they could pick it up, the pet lamb ate it.

He just ran at it—all in play and for fun—swallowed the diamond with one gulp, and then ran away with two skips and a shake of his tail.

The Tartars flew into a violent rage; the princess cried and sobbed: "Oh, Woolly-kins, how *could* you!" And then the Tartars let in a whole army to take possession of the palace; and the poor princess had just time to hide the pet lamb in the cellar before the soldiers began rushing about everywhere to find him and kill him. Blue-eyes was afraid he would bleat and be found. But he did not; and after searching in vain, the soldiers went and stationed themselves all round the palace outside, while the three Tartars ordered three tables to be laid, one for each.

"Here we are going to stay," they said, "until Princess Blue-eyes chooses which she will marry, or pays us to go by giving us back the diamond."

Then Princess Blue-eyes wept, and offered them all her jewels instead of it. But they were resolute. Either she should go back with them to Tartary, or she should order the butcher to find and kill the pet lamb, and give them back the great diamond.

The three Tartars were most unfeeling. They ate up all the sugar, and nobody in the palace had any sugar in their tea. And the three Tartars also ordered lamb—always lamb—for breakfast, for dinner, and for supper.

The princess herself was obliged to wait on them. And each time she came with the dish of meat, they would say to each other, "Oh! I hope this is the right lamb at last; he's a long time coming. Fair Princess, when will you be able to give us the diamond?"

One day Blue-eyes was in great distress, because there was no more lamb to be had at the butcher's. And just then the gas-man came, and said he wanted to look at the meter. You may be surprised to hear that there was gas in fairy times and on the borders of Tartary; but if you are too particular about what might happen or what might not, you had better stop here, and not read any more, for there are some strange things coming—much more surprising than the gas-meter in the palace coal-cellar.

You are going to read on, and find out what the gas-man did? Very well.

Princess Blue-eyes went rushing downstairs when she heard the servants let him in; because it was in *that* cellar that Woolly-kins was hidden.

"Don't let my pet lamb run out," whispered the princess.

"Certainly not, miss!" said the gas-man.

And when he was gone in, the princess waited outside the cellar door, and her heart went pit-a-pat all the time.

Now, the name of the gas-man was not Brown or Jones, or anything like that. He was really Prince Sunflower in disguise, and he wanted to find out what was going on at the palace

when it was surrounded by the soldiers. For all the neighbours knew that the princess was a prisoner in her own palace.

Prince Sunflower saw no lamb in the cellar; and when he looked up at the gas meter he heard a small sound of singing.

"Oh dear!" said he, "what's here? There is something wrong—that's clear. Is it going to explode, and pitch me out into the road?"

Then all at once he saw that what he had thought to be the gas meter was only a box, for its door flew open, and out came a crowd of little men as light as bubbles. They all had sugar-loaf hats on, and they floated in the air, dwindling small, and appearing and disappearing.

"What's the matter? I must be as mad as a hatter!" said the prince.

"No, you are not," said one of the little men. "What do you see on the floor?"

The prince looked, and saw a silver chain. He took one end of it in his hand. And at once the little man came floating down to the ground, and caught the other end. And the chain—which was nothing else but the pet lamb's collar—stretched out very long when they pulled it, and then fell clanking on the floor. It had turned into a helmet, shield, and battle-axe, all as bright as silver.

Prince Sunflower armed himself; and the fairy men called "Follow! follow! follow!" and led him out by a secret passage, which was at the very back of the coal-cellar. The only thing he said on the way was—"I don't like this running about: I'd rather get the princess out."

"But there are three Tartars with an army," said the little men. "*We* are all as light as bubbles, and could do nothing. But we know a very obliging giant."

"Then go with all speed; I shall follow where you lead," said the prince.

So they set off to find the "very obliging giant."

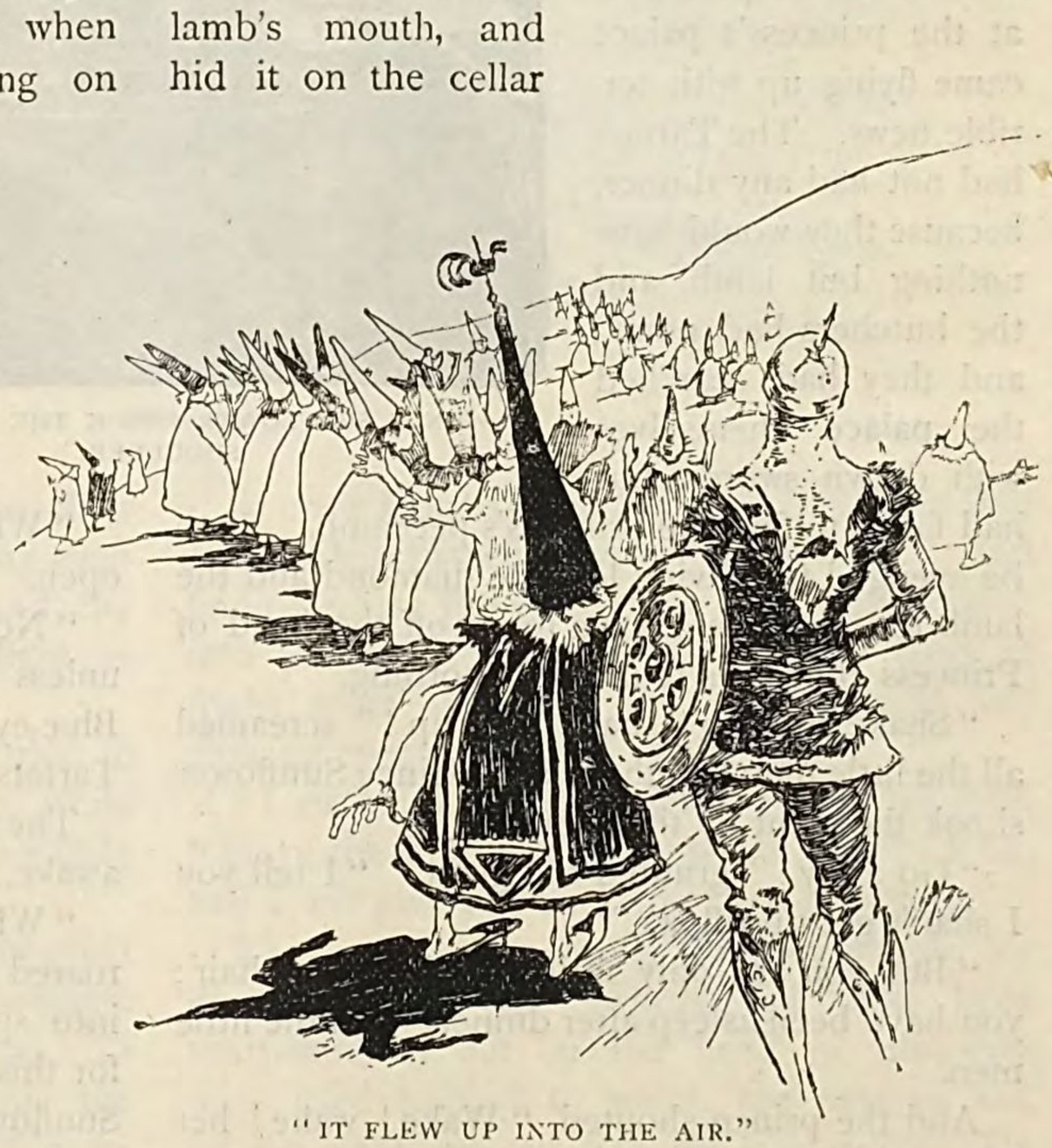
It was a strange journey. The little men with the sugar-loaf hats grew and dwindled and got big again just as if they were air balloons.

"There is no such thing as weight among us," they said. "Did you ever hear that Princess Blue-eyes had a pet lamb? Yes. Well, it was a stray lamb from Fairyland; and we made it as light as a feather, and the size of a thimble, and we brought it out through the secret passage, and the wind carried it away home."

Prince Sunflower could not understand until they showed him the same trick played on an elephant. They touched the immense animal, and it flew up into the air, becoming smaller and smaller, and was carried away by the wind.

"Now," said the prince, "why don't you do that to the Tartars? Oh, goodness gracious!—my stars and garters! Wouldn't I laugh to see—the Tartars up in the air—all three?"

"We shall do it," said the little men, shaking their little heads and their sugar-loaf caps with great determination. "But we took a large diamond out of the lamb's mouth, and hid it on the cellar floor; and Woolly-kins said it belonged to Katchoo Khan. So we must settle a little business



"IT FLEW UP INTO THE AIR."

first. The giant, who is not afraid of anybody, will hand back the diamond and get a receipt for it—to say that we owe the Tartars nothing; and then up in the air they shall go."

As they finished speaking they reached the home of the very obliging giant. But he was fast asleep.

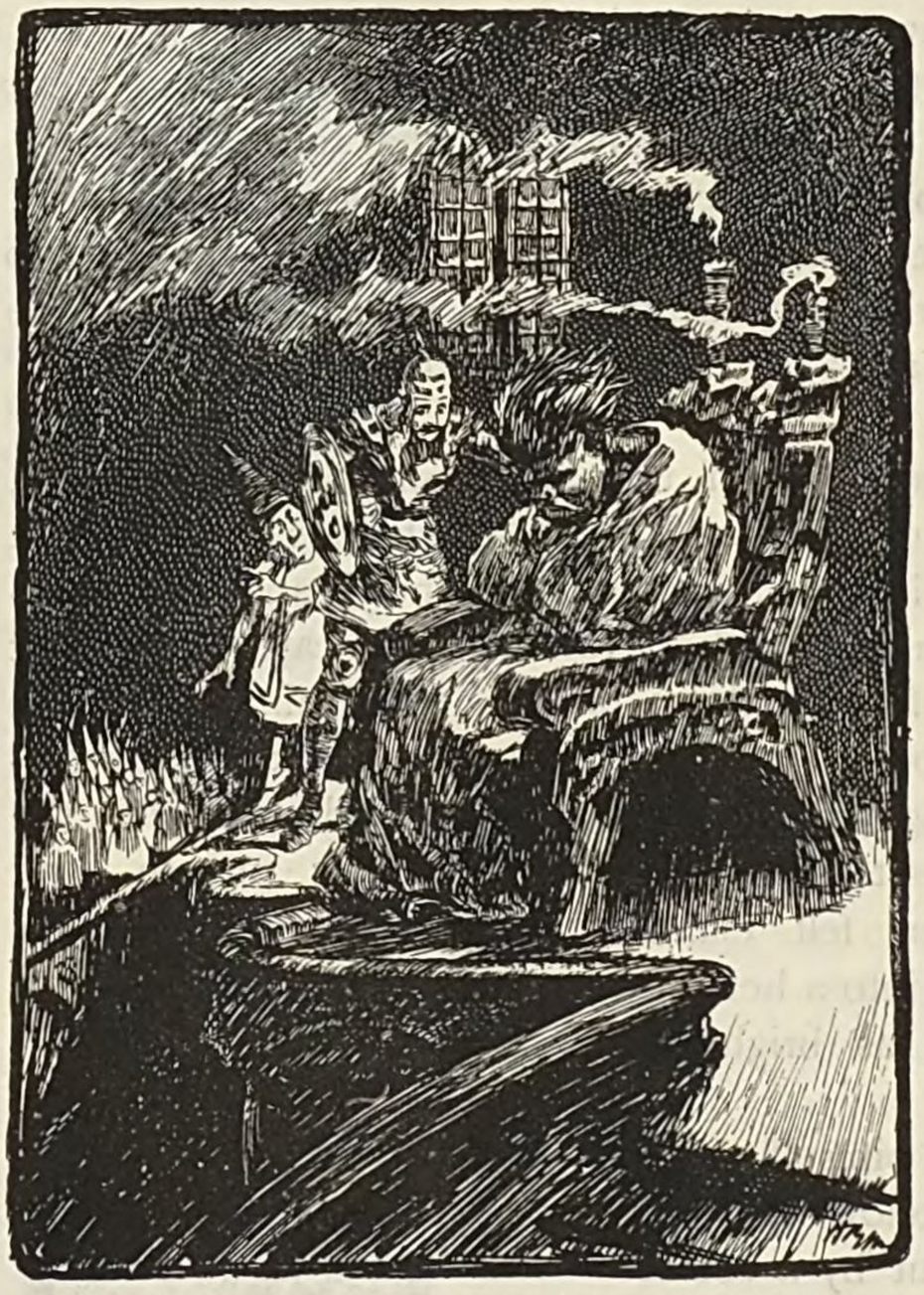
"Wake up!" they said. "There is a princess to be set free."

The giant snored, and spoke in his sleep. "I tell you it is not six o'clock yet."

"Oh, come along, do! we are in such a stew!" said Prince Sunflower, who could never speak without making rhymes.

The giant answered nothing, but snored comfortably.

Then one of the little men who had remained behind to watch events at the princess's palace came flying up with terrible news. The Tartars had not had any dinner, because they would have nothing but lamb, and the butchers had none; and they had searched the palace themselves with drawn swords, but had failed to find the princess's pet lamb. So to be avenged for having lost the diamond and the lamb too, they were going to cut off the head of Princess Blue-eyes to-morrow morning.



"PRINCE SUNFLOWER SHOOK THE GIANT BY THE SHOULDER."

"Shake him up! shake him up!" screamed all the little men together; and Prince Sunflower shook the giant by the shoulder.

"Go away!" grunted the giant. "I tell you I shan't get up till six."

"But you are only sitting up in your chair; you have been asleep after dinner," said the little men.

And the prince shouted, "Wake! wake! her life is at stake."

"Steak, did you say?" repeated the giant, without opening his eyes. "Have seven pounds of beef-steak for my breakfast—a dozen of oysters—six muffins—and—" he snored again.

"This will never do," said the little men.

And the prince lost patience, and said, "We can't wait; it is frightful to think of her fate, if we are too late! Would it be too much trouble to make him as light as a bubble? Do, please, blow him into the air, and let him fall suddenly into his chair."

"The very thing!" said the little men. So they all gathered round the sleeping giant, and drew in a very long breath, and bowed their pointed caps three times, and then each touched him with a finger, and up he went.

"Stand out of the way!" said the little men to Prince Sunflower. "He shall have his own weight again in a moment; and he is rather heavy—a gentleman that eats seven pounds of beef-steak, and six muffins, and a dozen of oysters, you know."

Just as this was said, down came the giant with a bump into his chair.

"Where am I?" he said, with his eyes wide open. "Did I miss my step on the stairs?"

"Not at all," said the little men. "But unless you go at once to the castle of Princess Blue-eyes, her head will be chopped off by three Tartars."

The giant was a very active man when he was awake.

"Why did not you tell me before?" he roared; and jumped up, and kicked the chair into splinters. "Ho, ostler! saddle a horse for this gentleman. I presume, sir," to Prince Sunflower, "you can't fly?"

"I never *did* fly," said the prince; "but I don't know until I try."

"Oh, nonsense!" said the giant. "There's

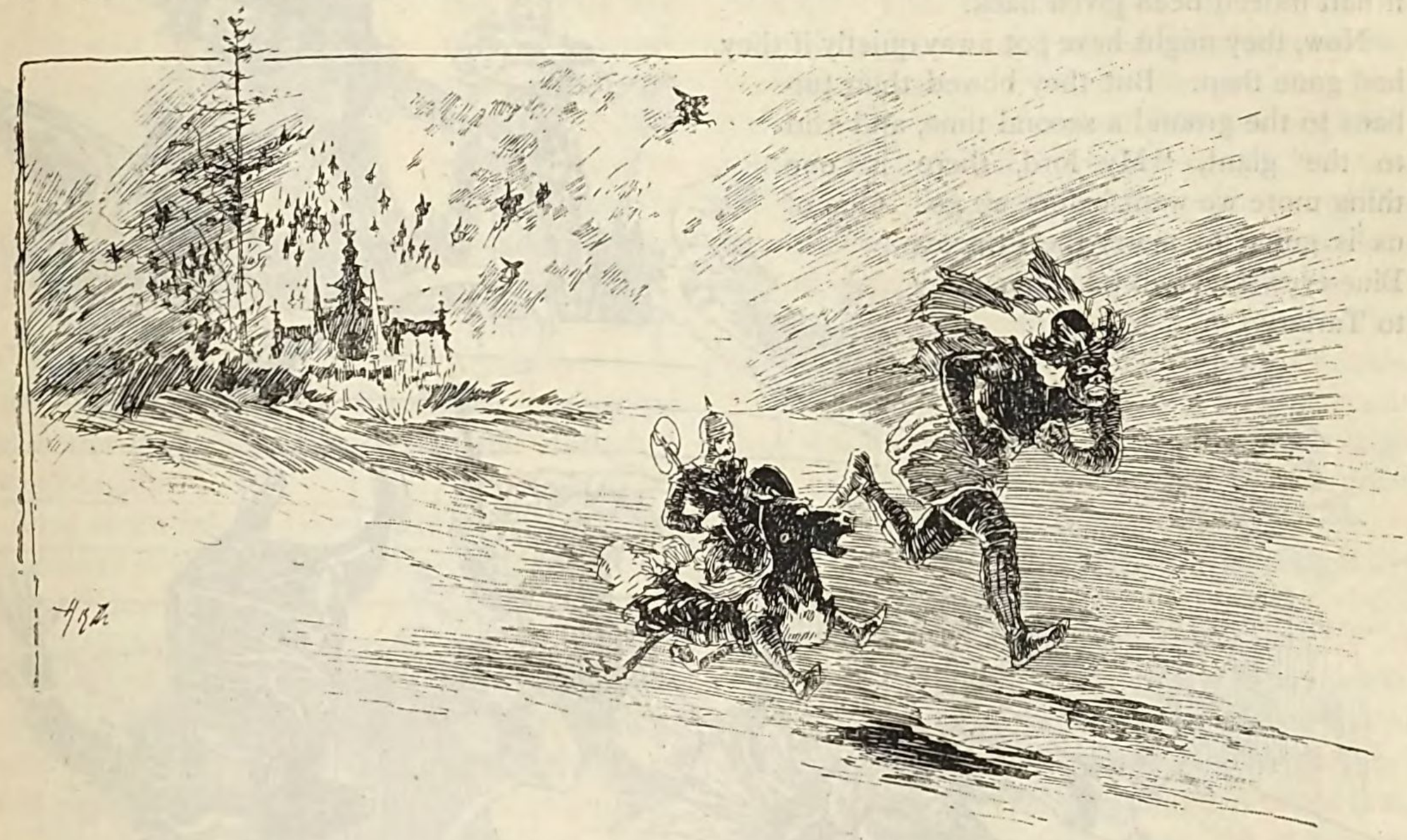
no time for experiments now. Here is the horse. Jump on!"

"Where are its legs?" said the prince. "It's an ostrich as sure as eggs are eggs."

"Why, look at its head!" said the giant.

But whether it was a horse or not when the prince mounted, it was certainly an ostrich when they got to the other end of their journey.

"I believe," said the prince, "it is all a dream. My supper was lobster and tarts and cream."



"IT WAS A TERRIBLE RIDE.

It was a terrible ride. The giant, pounding the earth with his huge feet, rushed along even faster than the prince's queer steed, and the little men all followed in the air, as light as bubbles.

On reaching their journey's end they tried to enter the palace by the secret passage, while the ostrich went scudding away, and the little men came down to earth.

But here there was a difficulty—a very great difficulty. The giant stuck in the secret passage, and they could get him neither in nor out. In the palace they could hear quite plainly the Tartars sharpening their swords, and Princess Blue-eyes crying out loud: "Oh, spare my life! Oh, let me live! and I'll go away and be a poor girl, and let you have the palace and everything."

When the giant heard her he made a desperate struggle to get out of the narrow passage and into the coal-cellar, and he groaned out loud. The prince was behind him, unable to get past. The groan of the giant shook the palace like the noise of an earthquake.

"What's that?" said the Tartars.

"What's that?" shrieked the princess.

"Do you want the great diamond of Tartary?" a voice called as if from the depths of the earth.

At once Tippoo Khan, and Katchoo Khan, and Ifyou Khan rushed down to the cellars. And finding where the voice came from, they looked into the coal-cellar, and they nearly died of fright when they saw the terrible head and glowing eyes at the back of the cellar.

"I am stuck," said the giant, rolling his eyes. "Have the kindness to loosen the bricks a bit, and I will give you back the star of Tartary."

They were very nervous, but they wanted the diamond. So the swords that had been sharpened to cut off the head of Blue-eyes were used instead to widen the passage and let the giant get out into the coal-cellar. He almost filled it. The prince crept round him unseen, and ran upstairs to look for the unhappy princess, and tell her to fear no more.

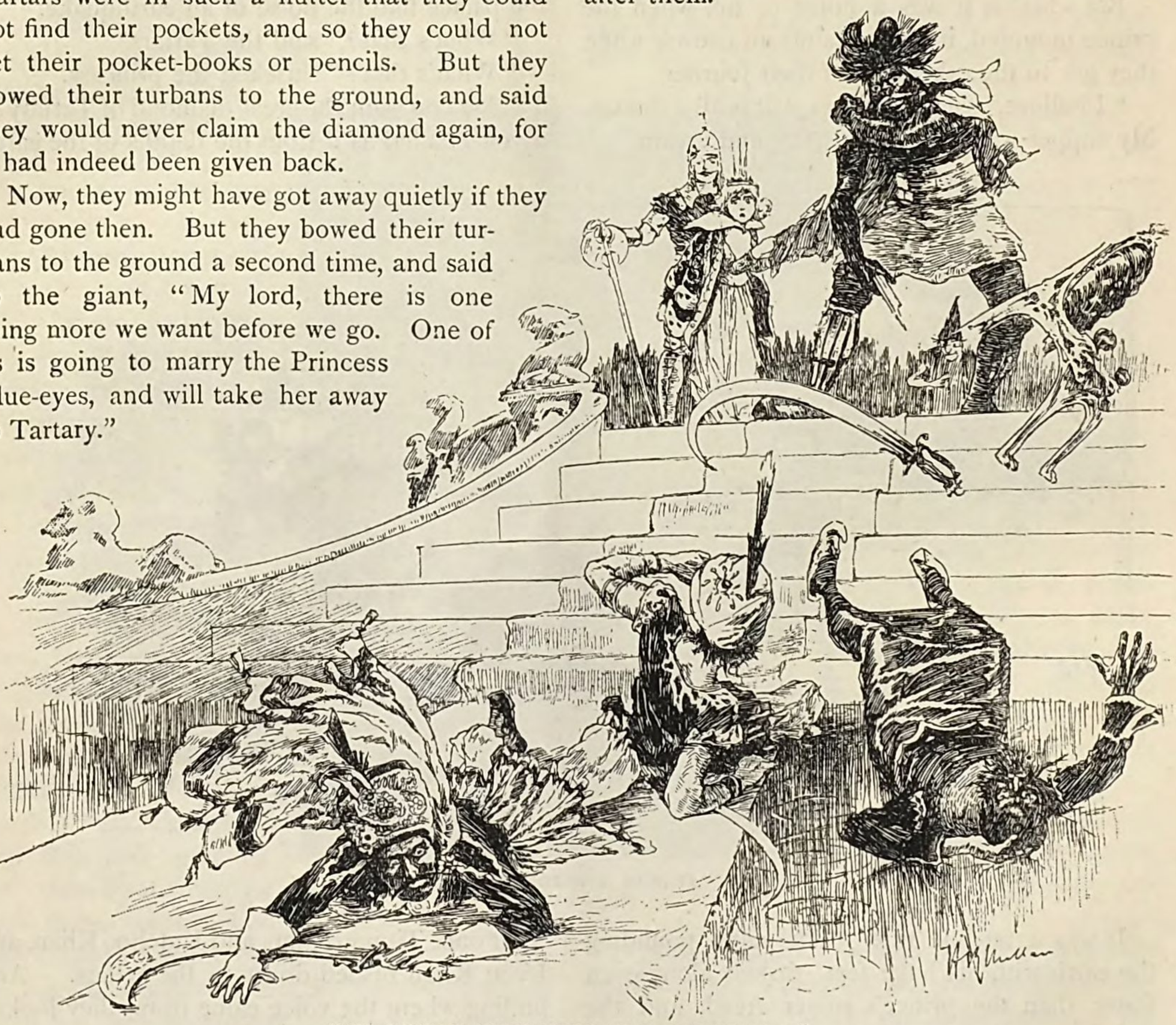
The giant, to whom the little men whispered the story, soon found the great diamond hidden on the floor, and gave it back to the Tartars.

"Write for me on a paper that the diamond has been given back," the giant said. The Tartars were in such a flutter that they could not find their pockets, and so they could not get their pocket-books or pencils. But they bowed their turbans to the ground, and said they would never claim the diamond again, for it had indeed been given back.

Now, they might have got away quietly if they had gone then. But they bowed their turbans to the ground a second time, and said to the giant, "My lord, there is one thing more we want before we go. One of us is going to marry the Princess Blue-eyes, and will take her away to Tartary."

"Please don't," said Princess Blue-eyes. "I don't want them to be killed. Besides, think of the furniture!"

And as she was pulling at his coat-tails, the angry giant threw no more of the furniture after them.



"HE HURLED THEM DOWN THE FRONT STEPS."

"Is there anything else you would like in a small way?" said the giant, hiding his anger.

"Well, yes," said Katchoo Khan. "We want the princess's pet lamb to make into chops."

"It was a fairy lamb!" roared the giant. "And if you don't get out, I'll make *you* into chops!"

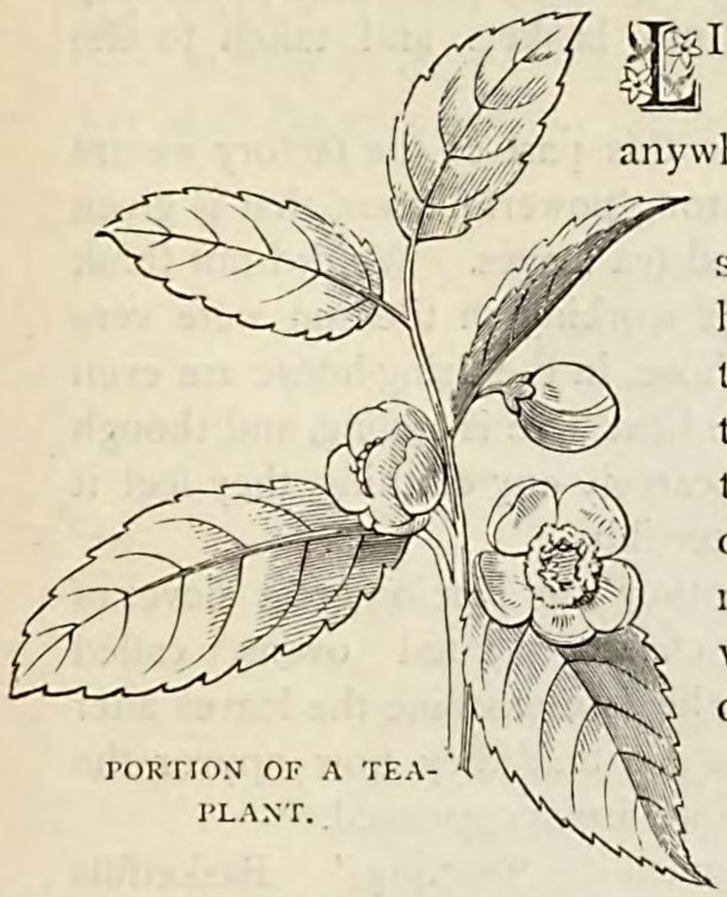
And so saying, he hunted them up the cellar stairs and through the hall of the palace. And he hurled them down the front steps in great wrath, flinging after them their weapons, and even chairs and tables, or any other object he could throw with his mighty hands.

Then the good little fairy men sent the Tartars and their army flying away; and the prince's brother came home from the war; and Prince Sunflower married Princess Blue-eyes; and everybody danced at the wedding—even the giant. *He* danced a giant's hornpipe, which came suddenly to an end, when he went down through the floor and into the kitchen.

Why, the fairy men should have made him as light as a bubble! Yes, of course they should; but they were all going home to Fairy-land when the giant began to dance.

FROM OVER THE SEA.

IV.—FROM A NURSERY IN INDIA TO A NURSERY AT HOME.



PORTION OF A TEA-PLANT.

LITTLE folk who have never lived anywhere out of old England can scarcely imagine how intense is the heat in the tropical country to which it is necessary we should now travel. For we are going to discover for ourselves something about the adventures that befall a pound of tea during its progress from the spot where it grows to the time when it is consumed.

Our seven-league boots have this time therefore carried us to India, and set us down at the foot of that great range of mountains known as the Himalayas. Look above: see how grandly against the bright blue sky the rugged peaks appear covered with snow that never melts, but which has lain there now for hundreds of years, and will so lie for hundreds longer, for all we can tell.

But where we stand: ah! how hot it is! Even as we gaze upward at the snowy heights we long that even one cooling breeze might reach us, for the sun's rays are beating down unmercifully; the heat seems not only to be felt, but to be *seen* hanging in a dazzling shiver all around, appearing literally to soak itself into everything.

It drives the white "planter" to the shelter of his "bungalow," as his pretty one-storeyed house is called, while the dark-skinned "coolies" who work on the tea garden are glad to crawl into the shade, and lie idle, at the first opportunity; even the birds seem unwilling to fly, but perch upon the trees in a drooping, dejected manner.

Later on in the year the rain will pour down in an unceasing torrent for days together, thunder will echo amongst the hills, lightning will flash from the dark clouds, and earthquakes will sometimes shake the ground. In the country where tea grows Nature, you see, never does anything by half measures.

There is an old Chinese legend which tells how many centuries ago a strange man arrived in China from over the borders of India, bringing with him some curious plants which he called "thea." The Chinese soon discovered its valuable properties, and turned its cultivation into a profitable trade. No one thought there was any truth in the old legend that tea originally came from India till a few years back, when, in the heart of the dense jungles, which were the haunts of wild elephants, tigers, venomous snakes, and all sorts of creepy crawly things, someone came across a little shrub, which on examination proved to be our well-known friend the tea-plant.

Very soon after that discovery a ring of axes at work was heard in the jungle, and presently large tracts of country were cleared, and a great industry sprang up in the place of it.

The first thing we must go and look at is the planter's "nursery." You want to hear about tea, not babies. Well, the planter's "nursery" is the carefully selected spot where he rears his tiny tea shrubs, and gives them plenty of rich soil to make them strong, and pruning to make them grow shapely and bear plentifully, in order that, presently, when the time comes to transplant them into his garden, they may appear respectable members of it, of which he can be justly proud.

Here in the nursery the coolie men are busy with long-handled hoes and sharp pruning-knives, keeping things in order. Indeed, seeing how beautifully neat the place looks, you can scarcely suppose that only a few months back the spot was covered with a thick tangly jungle, and infested with wild animals of all sorts and sizes. But the forest has been all cut down and burnt and on its ashes has arisen a smiling tract of cultivated country.

You wonder what became of all the wild animals. Well, they all betook themselves to happy hunting-grounds further afield. When the planter gets his well-earned holiday he sometimes joins a party of friends on a shooting expedition,

and goes after them, which is more exciting work than growing tea for the thirsty millions, though the roar that would go up from those millions if their supply of tea were suddenly stopped would be louder and more alarming than the voice of the very hungriest tiger that ever roamed an Indian jungle.

Is a tea garden pretty to look at? Well, no, it is not exactly picturesque. If you stand a little way off, it looks rather like a great field of exaggerated cabbages, for the shrubs are planted in rows, after the manner of that useful vegetable, and are of a heavy dark green in colour.

But it becomes a somewhat interesting picture when the women, in their bright-coloured petticoats and carrying large baskets on their backs, go in to commence "plucking." No one then in the coolie household is allowed to eat the rice of idleness, for the whole family turns out to work; even the tiny baby accompanies its mother. It is just set down anywhere in its shallow basket, and left for hours to take care of itself while the blazing sun beats down upon its small naked brown body. Poor little coolie baby—why, it never is cool at all, excepting in name, but has to battle with heat from the very first. No wonder that it presently grows up into a weedy, long-legged lad, with a weakness for doing nothing if he can.

Is it not wonderful to see how quickly the women and children pluck the tea-leaves, and toss them by handfuls into the great deep basket carried on their backs? while all the time up and down the lines of busy workers walks the "sidah," or head coolie, armed with a long stick, which causes considerable inconvenience at times to some of the small fry who are fonder of play than of employment.

The sidah's duty is to keep the coolies to their work, and to this end he goes about encouraging them with loud talking, and shouts of "Che loa! che loa!"

Hark! what is that strange discordant noise? That is the gong which sounds every day at certain hours, and is a signal that the pluckers are to leave off work and bring their baskets up to the "tea-house," or factory, where the quantity is weighed, and then laid out in open bamboo frames to "wither." When the leaves have withered or dried enough, and feel soft, like tiny pieces of kid glove, they are put into a machine called a "roller," which has been sent out at great cost from England. This roller squeezes the withered leaves, and passes them out ready to be placed into baskets and taken to the "firing-house."

As we go into this part of the factory we are struck by the strong powerful scent that is given off by the heated tea leaves. We did not think the poor coolies working in the sun were very fortunate, but those in the firing-house are even worse off, for the heat here is stifling, and though the men wear scarcely any clothing, they feel it evidently most terribly.

All day long they are placing great sieves of tea over the charcoal-heated ovens, called "dhools," and when we examine the leaves after this process we see that they now appear the colour to which we are accustomed.

After firing comes the "sorting." Basketfuls of the yet warm tea are shot out into a machine that sifts the large from the small, while the "dust" falls to the bottom; and this done, the next process is the "packing," which is carried on in the presence of the English owner himself, as it is most important that the boxes lined with tin should be properly fastened, weighed, and branded.

Then coolies carry the boxes on their backs down the hill side, where a trained elephant is waiting to transport them across the river lately swollen by the heavy rains. The elephant lands them on the opposite bank, and again we see coolies hoist them on their shoulders and trudge off.

Then down on the broad stream of the sacred river Ganges, in a steamer bound for Calcutta, goes our tea, multiplying its experiences every day of its existence.

On reaching the capital, it is conveyed with all despatch into the hold of some great steamship waiting to receive it, and is soon on its road towards England.

Well, no doubt, you all know the rest of its history, and how from the docks it goes to the merchant's warehouse, and from there to the grocer's shop, until at last, by easy stages, some of it finds its way into your own familiar nursery teapot at home.

What a strange history there is, if we only knew it, attached to every single cup of tea that we drink!

EDITH A. FINDLAY.

ARCHIE'S FORGETFULNESS.

ARCHIE was really a very good boy: his mother always said so, and his grandmother thought there was not such another boy in all the wide world. Yet there was no denying that he had a knack of continually getting into trouble.

He and the old baby were spending the day with grandmother, Mrs. Crump—there was a new baby too now, but so far nobody had begun to call the old baby by his Christian name, which was Matthew, and did not seem to suit him.

They had had their dinner, and Archie remembered that it was Mrs. Crump's habit to take a nap in her easy-chair in the afternoon.

"Granny," said he, "shall we go out and play in the garden while you go to sleep?"

"THE KITTEN CLIMBED ON TO THEIR SHOULDERS" (*p.* 246).

The old lady put on her spectacles and looked at him. She hardly liked to trust the children out of her sight; but the afternoon was hot, and she was very drowsy. And she reflected that Archie was such a good boy.

"You must not play about all over the place," she said then. "You may take your picture-book and the kitten, and go straight down to

the seat under the tree. When you're tired of being there, come in again. I don't want you wandering about without me."

"Yes, grandma," said Archie brightly. "Come along, baby."

So he gave Matthew the picture-book to carry, and picked up the kitten himself, and they went along the path to the garden seat. He sat down, with his little brother on his knee, and made up a tale about every picture, while the kitten climbed on to their shoulders, or frisked here and there after flies.

At last they came to the end, and shut up the book.

"Why, where's the kitty?" exclaimed Archie. They gazed about them, but pussy was nowhere to be seen.

"Oh, I want pussy, I want pussy!" said the old baby sadly; and he looked as if he were going to cry.

"Let's go and find her," said Archie, jumping off the seat, and setting baby on the ground. He had quite forgotten his grandmother's instructions, and while Mrs. Crump was calmly dozing indoors, not even dreaming that they were in mischief, the two children were roaming wherever they pleased in search of the kitten, who was all the time up the tree by the garden seat.

There were so many interesting things in this garden that they were very happy. There were the beehives, where they watched the bees flying out of their little door, until the old baby touched one hive, when they had to run away in a hurry, as two or three bees were angry and flew after them.

It was the greatest wonder that neither of them was stung. They were frightened, though, and kept away from the beehives afterwards. Then they went into the little tool-shed, opened and shut the shears, played with the rake and the trowel, and finally they wandered down to the pond, and looked into the water to see if there were any fishes.

All at once, as they stood there, Archie's memory returned.

"Oh!" he said in a dismayed voice, "granny told us not to. Baby, we must go in."

"No, no, no!" cried the child, snatching away his hand, as Archie took hold of it to lead him back.

"Yes, come along, baby dear. You must, really."

But baby had a will of his own, and he was happy out here. As Archie tried to persuade him, he stepped backwards to escape, and in an instant, in the middle of saying "No!" he went with a splash into the pond. Archie shrieked and clutched at him, but it was of no use; he only just touched the baby's pinafore with the tips of his fingers, and then there was no baby anywhere to be seen.

Becky, Mrs. Crump's servant, was chopping up some wood in the tool-shed, when she heard screams from the direction of the pond. She dropped her chopper and ran, and what was her horror to find Archie up to his waist in the water, apparently going further in as fast as he could.

Becky, who was a big strong woman, marched into the pond in a moment, and seized him round the waist; but Archie pushed her away, and gasped something that at first she could not understand. But the gleam of a little pink pinafore a yard or two away, that showed for a moment, then vanished, explained the case, and she knew that what he had said was "*Baby!*"

The next minute Becky had a small helpless figure in her arms, and was making her way back on to dry ground, pulling Archie with her. The pond was only two or three feet deep, but it was quite deep enough to have nearly drowned the poor little fellow. He lay back, unconscious, with closed eyes.

They met the grandmother coming to look for them, for she had awaked from her sleep in a fright.

She said not a word, and did not even glance at Archie, who was shivering so that he could scarcely stand. The next instant Mrs. Crump and Becky had disappeared with the baby into the kitchen, and Archie sat outside on the floor, so frightened and bewildered he hardly knew where he was.

After a long time Becky came quickly out, and pulled him in to the fire. "Now for this one," she said, "before he catches his death of cold. Why, he looks worse than the other."

The old baby was lying quietly in granny's arms, rather pale and exhausted; his eyes

followed the movements of the two by the fire. Archie gave a great start of joy. Baby was not drowned!

"Oh, granny," he sobbed out, as Becky took off his wet things, "I forgot!"

His grandmother shook her head gravely. "I shouldn't think you will soon forget this," she said. "I doubted whether we should bring him round."

Further than that, neither she nor anyone else ever reproached Archie. Mrs. Crump was right: whatever he might fail to remember he could never forget the day when the old baby was nearly drowned. ANNIE S. FENN.

AN UNWELCOME PUPPY.

"HERE'S the puppy!" said Uncle Tom, taking something from under his coat, and holding it out to me.

But I did not care about dogs at all in those days, and I had set my heart on having a kitten, so I put my hands behind me, and looked at the new arrival instead of taking it.

"Just look at him," uncle went on. "He has not a white hair anywhere. I should call him Sweep if I were you. He will soon be big enough to take care of you when you go for one of your rambles, and he will be able to find all the things you lose, for he is a retriever. Never mind, Nell dear," he added, as the hot colour rushed to my face, "you will be tidy by-and-by, and there will be no harm in Sweep's helping you. As for your walks, your mother will not be anxious about you when Sweep is able to go with you."

I thanked Uncle Tom rather shortly, and patted the fat black puppy, making up my mind all the time that I should never, never, never like it as much as a kitten. But before a year was over I would not have exchanged Sweep for all the cats in England.

As I was the only child for several years, mother used to let me be with her a great deal, and when she did not want me I used to go into the wood, and read or play by myself. My father was a doctor, and was out so much that he hardly knew how I spent my time; but one hot day, when I had fallen asleep in the wood, and did not come home till people had been sent to look for me in all directions, Uncle Tom, who had come on a visit, said that he would find me a companion, so that mother should not be nervous about me. So Sweep came, and I naughtily made up my mind not to like him.

"Sissy, where's my Sissy?" said a voice just as Sweep rolled off the dining-room table in a vain attempt to keep hold of his own tail.

The words dispersed the clouds like magic. For years, as I said, I had been the only child, but one day a little baby brother came, and now that he was nearly two and a half years old, I loved him with all my heart. Taking Sweep into my arms, I ran to the hall, and found nurse just ready to take Willie for a walk. "Me stroke doggie," he cried, dropping my doll, with perfect indifference as to the effect on her face and limbs; "me kiss doggie."

I must own that I felt a wee bit jealous when I saw Willie stoop down and shower kisses on Sweep's head. I picked up my neglected doll and ran upstairs for my hat, determined that I would go out this once alone.

I felt that Dorothy, my best loved doll, had been slighted, so I tried to be extra kind to her. I put on her very best frock, and looked in as I passed mother's room to say "good-bye," and see if she could lend me something, as she often did, to make Dorothy look specially nice.

Mother was not there, so I looked round for myself. On a little side table I saw a small leather case. What a lovely thing there was inside: it seemed to sparkle with all the colours of the rainbow. Without stopping to think whether it was right or wrong, I pinned the brooch on my doll's frock.

"I know mother won't mind, Dorothy, for she often lends us something, doesn't she?" I said. "Now we will go out for a lovely ramble, and forget that tiresome puppy."

A GALLANT RESCUE. (*See p.* 249.)

All might have been well that day if I had not gone back to my room to fetch a book. Instead of going to the wood, I went to my favourite reading corner. It was such a quiet nook that you might have read there for a week, and no one would have disturbed you but the birds and the fishes. My seat was the hollow trunk of an old tree which grew by the river side.

On that particular day I suppose I was tired, for after reading awhile I felt very sleepy. I must have dozed, I believe, for I woke with a start. Both my book and my doll had disappeared. Of course I thought I must have dropped them into the trunk of the tree, and leaning down, I felt as far as my arm would reach. I found the book, but could not feel the doll anywhere.

Oh, the tears that I shed over the loss of my favourite! they were bad enough, but when I suddenly remembered the brooch, my sobs became screams.

"Whatever is the matter?" asked Uncle Tom. "Are you hurt? Well, come down and tell me what you have done. Gently, Sweep, gently! She doesn't want any more water—she has nearly drowned herself in tears already."

I could not help laughing when I caught sight of the puppy, all dripping with the water from his first bath in the river; and I was glad enough to sit down by uncle's side and tell him all about the doll and the brooch. He fetched the gardener and a ladder, but all that they found out was that there was one hole which went further down the trunk than the others; and probably my doll had fallen into it.

"There's nothing for it but to cut the tree down," said the gardener. But as the tree did not belong to us, but to a disagreeable old miser, who would not have allowed us even to *look* at his land if there had not been a right of way through, mother had to go without her lovely diamond brooch which uncle had just given her.

A year went by. We were going to leave our country home, for father had bought a practice in London. The vans were at the door; one was half filled, the other was empty, and stood with doors wide open, when mother asked if I would like to walk round with her to say "good-bye" to my favourite haunts. Sweep came too. As usual, he amused himself by diving for the stones which I threw into the river for him.

Suddenly mother gave a little cry of surprise. Instead of a stone, Sweep came towards us with my lost doll in his mouth, and on the doll was the diamond brooch. It was some yards from the tree where I dropped it, and we heard from the gardener afterwards that he found that the hole went right through the trunk of the tree, just below the edge of the water. So poor Dorothy must have gradually fallen lower and lower, till she probably lodged in the stones and mud where Sweep found her. We did not prolong our walk, but hurried back to tell father.

When we reached the house we found everything in an uproar. Nurse was in tears, father was pale and angry, and everyone seemed distracted. Willie, our little darling, was lost.

This was worse than a dozen diamond brooches; but just because Sweep had helped me in one case, I turned to him now.

"Go find little Willie. Go find!" I cried, snatching up a tiny glove which lay on the gravel walk, and giving it to the dog to smell. Nurse then told us that she had left Willie in the garden whilst she ran back to fetch something, and when she came down he was gone.

"How long ago was that?" asked father.

"About ten minutes, sir."

"Long enough for him to have got down to the river and be drowned. Sweep, Sweep! Why doesn't the stupid dog go after him?"

Sweep had been scenting round. He had rushed into the van half filled with furniture, and now was yelping in the empty one.

Father and I ran into the van after him. At the further end of the huge van I saw a brass handle within a foot or two of the floor.

"There's a drawer or cupboard there," I cried. "Open it quick, father!"

With a merry laugh Willie sprang out.

"I'm glad you came," he cried; "it was getting so hot. You did take a time to find me."

"Well, to be sure," said an old carman. "That black dog was only just in time. I saw the cupboard a little way open, and shut it myself five minutes ago. The young gentleman couldn't have stopped alive in there long."

Do you wonder after this that we all loved Sweep?

OUR SUNDAY AFTERNOONS.

MY JEWEL CASKET, AND SOME OF ITS WONDERFUL CONTENTS.

By MAGGIE SYMINGTON, *Author of "From Seed to Blossom," "The King's Command," etc.*

X.—THE LIGHT OF EMERALDS.

T was a summer's evening, fair and sweet. Green and pleasant meadows lay all around the battle-field where a terrible fight had been. Good men and brave had met their death that day. The field was strewn with the bodies which only that morning had held the souls of living men. They were empty and silent now, in the light of the rosy sunset. The roar of cannon, the clash of steel, were past also, but the stillness seemed the deeper for the din of battle that had been.

At one particular spot the bodies lay piled one upon another; the thick of the fight had evidently been there. The men had been cut down like grass as they stood in the form of a square, faithful to the last, bravely choosing to die rather than desert the colours which lay trampled beneath them. The trial of their faithfulness had proved them to be staunch and true. Death had set its seal on this faithfulness: no one could doubt it any more. People might have questioned it before, but now it had been proved beyond all possibility of doubt.

Why am I drawing for you such a picture as this—so sad a one, my children, in some respects, but so glorious in others? I have sketched it to illustrate the subject of our chat this afternoon. The light of emeralds which shines out of the inner depths of my casket is just this same quality of faithfulness.

The Bible tells us that round about the throne of God this beautiful emerald light shines, like a rainbow in its loveliness. Also it says: "O Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto Thee? Or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee?"

God is faithful, you see: there are numbers of texts which tell us this. How comforting it is to know that God will never fail us! that, however much we may be disappointed in people and things here on earth, He will exceed all our expectations!

Yes: He is more even than the hearts of little children can imagine.

Let us just think for one moment what this means to us.

The hearts and minds of little children are full of dreams of loveliness and visions of beauty, but God exceeds their wildest dreams, their fairest visions. He has never yet, since first the world was made, caused the least disappointment to any little child who trusted Him. He could not do it, because in His very nature He is faithful and true.

The souls of little children yearn to be loved. The love of God is so great that He can satisfy the craving of these little souls as nothing else can. The hands of little children are weak, but God can make them strong to dare and to do mighty things. The feet of little children falter and stumble, but God can make them steady and sure. And He will do all this, and far more, if little children will believe that He is faithful and true, that He is able as well as willing to save and protect them; strong to hold, and true to guide, both feeble hands and faltering feet.

The light of emeralds is both bright and steady: it does not flash or sparkle.

I am sure you know that the emerald is a green stone. The light surrounding it, therefore, has a green appearance that is cool and refreshing to the eyes. You know, I daresay, how it rests your eyes, when they are tired with poring over lesson-books, to look out of the window upon the green trees. So it is just as restful to lift your eyes in all your troubles—little troubles and big troubles, too, for children have just as many troubles in their way as bigger people—and fix them on Jesus. Only to think of His perfect faithfulness is refreshing,

like green leaves to tired eyes, or bright steady daylight after the glare of lamps.

Even the shadow of green leaves is restful to our eyes sometimes. So the emeralds in my jewel casket have about them an atmosphere of refreshment, although the light which comes from them is but a faint reflection of the light about God's throne. This reflection, however, tells us something of what the true light is like; and this is why we can see, in the faithfulness of every true servant of God, something of the faithfulness of God Himself.

I wonder if you can remember any instances of faithfulness of this kind? History contains many. I will tell you of one you will not find in any history: it is true, none the less.

Many hundreds of years ago there lived a little lad whose name was Wolfstan. His father was the steward of a very rich lord—the dishonest steward, I feel bound to say. He thought to make himself rich by taking his master's goods and storing them up for himself. That is the way to become poor, really, but he did not know that. In those days there were no banks, and it was customary for people to carry their riches with them wherever they went; they could not have done this if their riches had consisted of money.

We should think it very strange now if noblemen, when they went up to town, took their whole fortune with them, and a large company of armed servants and dependents to protect it. Little Wolfstan was quite accustomed to see this done. He had often been one of such a company. He was only ten years old, but he rode by his father's side, and shared the perils of such a journey as though he had been a man. He knew the difficulties of the way—the districts infested with robbers, the swamps where fever and ague lurked, the idlers who followed them to beg and to steal all they could.

It was no easy thing to be a steward in those days, because it was a rule with no exceptions for him to have to risk his life many times, and often to lose it, in defence of his master's property. This property consisted for the chief part of rich stuffs and rare jewels. Of course there was the land and the castle left behind, but all portable property was carried in the way I have described.

The boy knew, too, how those perils of the way were to be met and conquered. He was the bravest little fellow you could imagine, and never a thought of fear entered his heart whenever he heard of a new journey to be undertaken.

The king had brought home to England a beautiful foreign princess to be his queen. She was to be crowned with great ceremony in the Abbey of Westminster. It was the duty of every noble in the land to appear at Court in magnificent apparel, so little Wolfstan was going to the great city once more, in company with his parents and all the members of his lord's household. And with them were two merchants from Italy, having in their keeping rich velvets from Genoa, silks from Naples, pearls and diamonds, cloth of gold, and laces from Italian convents, wrought by the nuns. All this fine array was to deck the lord and the lady to whose household little Wolfstan belonged, and help them to appear fitly at Court.

One would have thought the whole mind of the steward would have been set upon getting safely to London. It was not so, however. His first thought was to profit by an occasion so rare and so tempting.

Little Wolfstan, kept awake one night by the excitement of the day's journey, heard his parents plan to rob these merchants of some of their most valuable treasures. He lay so still they thought him asleep, and all the while he was trembling in the darkness, full of fear, not for himself, but for them. If their plan succeeded—but it must not. God helping him, he would save them from sin, and his master from being robbed.

When their tongues were silent, and their deep breathing told him that they were asleep, he crept out of the room he shared with them in the country inn, and went to look for the merchants. He found them asleep in the large common room of the inn, their heads laid on their saddle-bags.

"Good sirs," cried little Wolfstan, "awake, awake!"

They sprang to their feet in an instant, but were angry when they found the danger they feared came to them in the form of a child.

"Listen!" said the boy: "I have overheard

a plot to rob you of my master's goods. Take ten men of the company and get you away to London. Lose not a moment if you value your silks and jewels."

The lad's earnestness carried conviction with it. The merchants believed him and departed.

Little Wolfstan scorned to deny what he had done, and his father's anger fell upon him severely. He bore his punishment bravely, knowing that his prayer had been answered—his master's treasures were safe, and his parents had sinned in thought only.

The light of emeralds! What is it?

Can you not see it in little Wolfstan's faithfulness—in the death of the soldiers at duty's post?

It is just this: promptly and unquestioningly fulfilling the duty that lies nearest.

A WALK IN AUTUMN.

NOW the birds are growing silent,
And the swallows fly afar
Where the skies are blue and sunny,
And the breezes gentle are;
Summer roses have departed,
And the flowers we longed to keep
Hung their heads in field and garden,
Shut their eyes and went to sleep.

But there's beauty still around us;
All the trees across the land
Have put on their robes of autumn,
And in red and gold they stand;
Smiling asters lift their faces
Through the short and chilling days,
Like brave hearts that, always cheery,
Tell of joy, and hope, and praise.

Robin chirps amid the branches,
Just as if he tried to show
He is not afraid of winter,
Or the tempest or the snow;
There is One who holds the birdies
And all creatures in His care,
For their wants the Lord provideth,
He beholds them everywhere.

And he never will forget you,
Little children of His love,
While the summer sun is shining,
Or when skies grow dim above;
Spring and summer, autumn, winter
Show His mercy, vast and wide—
He who feeds the little redbreast
Calls the bairnies to His side.

M. S. HAYCRAFT.

BIBLE EXERCISES.

37. Where does Moses speak of the way in which the eagle teaches its young ones to fly?

38. Where do we read of the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove?

39. Where does Solomon speak of its being much better to get wisdom than gold, and understanding than silver?

40. Where do we find the names of the seven men first appointed by the Apostles to be deacons?

41. Where does St. Paul tell us that the strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves?

42. Where is it said that God is to be feared above all gods?

43. What city, famous in the history of Elijah, does Jesus mention as belonging to Sidon?

44. Where is it said that a whole city is exalted by the blessing of the upright?

45. Where is incense spoken of as symbolic of the prayers of God's children?

46. Where does the Psalmist tell us that there is no want to them that fear God?

47. Where is Jesus spoken of as "the carpenter, the son of Mary?"

48. Where do we find that St. Paul was a tent-maker?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE EXERCISES.—25—36. (*See p.* 183.)

25. In Eccles. vii. 1. 26. In Job. xxxix. 13. 27. Solomon (1 Kings x. 22; 2 Chron. ix. 21). 28. Urijah (Jer. xxvi. 20—24). 29. In Jer. ii. 22; Mal. iii. 2. 30. In Ps. xcvii. 10. 31. In Prov. xxviii. 27. 32. In Ps. xxxvi. 8. 33. In Jer. ii. 7; xvi. 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 5. 34. In Is. li. 6—8. 35. The partridge (Jer. xvii. 11). 36. In St. Mark xiv. 13; St. Luke xxii. 10.

NETTY'S LESSON.

A STORY IN SIMPLE WORDS.

IT was a very warm day. Netty had been playing out of doors, and wanted to get into a cool place. She had taken off her great flapping hat, and she sat down on the stairs, and said—

"The windows are all open, and the air will come down the stairs, and I shall be cool."

Still there was nothing to do, and she soon got tired.

"I will go and see what cook is doing in the kitchen," she said to herself.

But just then cook was not in the kitchen, but Netty saw that the larder door was open, and she thought she would go in and have a look round.

There was a great jar of flour on the floor, and some onions were lying about, but Netty did not care for them; she looked up, and on a shelf she saw some white pots. "Jam-pots, I dare-say," said Netty, standing on tip-toes and reaching one down.

"NETTY . . . . PUT HER FINGER INTO THE POT."

Yes, it was jam—damson jam, as Netty found when she took off the paper. What a fine dark colour it was; and it looked so good, that Netty, not having a spoon, put her finger into the pot, and drew it out with some jam sticking to it. How good it was! Netty went on dipping her finger into it till she found she had eaten nearly all that was in the pot. Then she felt frightened, for she knew it was very naughty to take the jam without leave. So she went away and ran upstairs to wash her hands.

She heard her mother calling, "Netty! Netty!"

But Netty was afraid to go, lest her mother should ask where she had been. Instead of going to her she slipped out into the garden again, and went into the meadow. She had no hat on, and she soon began to feel very hot. So she tied her handkerchief over her head to keep the sun off, and then she sat down. Soon she began to feel ill, for she had eaten so much jam that she said to herself—

"I will lie down on the grass for a little time, and then I shall feel better." So she lay down, and went to sleep.

Soon after Netty had gone away the cook went into the larder and found that someone had been to the jam-pots; and then she remembered that she had heard footsteps running upstairs.

"I think Miss Netty has been in the larder," said the cook to Netty's mother. "Someone has been eating the jam, almost a pot of it; it is enough to make her ill."

"Where is Netty?" said her mother.

No one knew; and as her hat was on a chair in the hall, no one thought she was out of doors.

But just then one of her father's men came up carrying Netty, who was half asleep and very pale.

"I'm afraid Miss Netty is ill," said he. "She seems very cold, and yet the sun was blazing down upon her."

"It's the jam," said the cook.

"I am afraid it is," said Netty's mother.

Yes, it was the jam and the heat together, and Netty had to take some physic, and did not feel well again for two or three days.

Besides, she knew how naughty she had been in taking the jam. And her mother told her that taking things that did not belong to her was stealing. Netty had not thought of that, and was more and more sorry for her fault. And you may be sure that she never again took anything else that did not belong to her.

G.

FOUR ON AN ISLAND.

By L. T. MEADE, *Author of "A World of Girls," "Polly: a New-Fashioned Girl," &c. &c.*

CHAPTER VII.—LEAVING HALF-MOON BAY.

WHEN Rachel said these words she rose to her feet, and running over to Isabel, hid her tearful face on her kind cousin's shoulder and began to sob bitterly.

"Oh, I've had such a dreadful time!" she said. "I have been all alone; and I never knew anything so bad as being alone here, for the trolls came out and pointed their pincers at me, and I think they grinned—I'm sure they grinned. Oh! I was so frightened—I thought I'd go wild with fright."

"But how long have you been alone, Rachel?" asked Ferdinand. "Stop crying now, and tell us what has happened."

Rachel raised her tearful face.

"Tony said he'd try and catch some fish for our dinner," she answered. "He said he knew quite well how it was done, and he took a fish-hook of Fernie's out of the basket and baited it with some bread, and used up a whole lot of Bell's worsted for line; and then he said he'd go and catch the fish, and I was to keep the fire up, and not go away on any account. And when Tony came back with the fish, he and I were going to cook it, and have it ready for your dinner. Oh! it was a lovely plan," concluded Rachel, "and I agreed quite willingly, but I forgot about the trolls when I agreed."

"How long ago was this, Rachel?" asked Bell. She spoke as cheerfully as she could, but her heart sank within her. "How long ago did this happen, dear Rachie?" she said. And she kissed her little cousin on her forehead.

Rachel sighed deeply.

"I don't know," she answered. "I think it was hours and hours ago. Anyhow, the fire went out, and the trolls came and grinned at me, and I have been *so* lonely!"

"Well, look here," said Ferdinand, "I had better go and hunt up that young scamp. He's sure to be somewhere not far off. Bell, will you light the fire again? Not a big one, please, but just enough to broil some fish for our dinner. I'll try and catch some after I have found this troublesome Tony. Now, Rachel, my dear, stop crying. I'll soon bring the truant back."

Ferdinand whistled as he spoke. He pretended to think lightly of this affair, but he was in reality more anxious than he cared to own. Tony was a venturesome little boy, and they none of them knew to what dangers they were exposed on this unknown shore.

Shading his eyes with his hand, Ferdinand carefully examined Half-Moon Bay. There was no use in going over the ground which he and Isabel had already trodden. He must try the other side of the bay. He did so, shouting his cousin's name as he ran. Presently the joyful sound of a faint bark came to his ears, and a poor little draggled, wet, half-drowned dog rushed up to him.

"Well, Mungo, where have you been?" said Ferdinand. "And where's Tony? Take me to him at once."

Mungo's whole heart shone out of his brown eyes. He had come to take Fernie to Tony; he had come for no other purpose.

"Let us fly this moment, then; we have not an instant to lose," he answered in his dog fashion; and he trotted on in front of Ferdinand, looking back at almost every other step to see if he was following.

The two had now nearly reached the other point of the bay, and here, to his horror, Ferdinand found poor Tony, seated on a point of rock, not only a long way from the shore, but with his poor little feet already covered with water, which was rising higher and higher each moment.

"Hold on, young 'un! I'm going out to you," shouted Ferdinand.

He hastily removed his shoes and stockings, flung off his jacket, and plunged into the water. He had never performed a more difficult feat than the one which now lay before him. Even yesterday's swim was nothing to this, for he was

now really among the breakers, and he had to put out all his strength to keep himself from being dashed against the rocks.

Ferdinand was, however, a lad with a very cool head, and he saw at a glance that the only way in which he could help Tony was by striking boldly out to sea, and when he had gone a certain distance turning back, and reaching the little fellow from the outer side of the rock.

When Tony saw his deliverer swimming, as he thought, away from him, he uttered a loud and despairing cry.

"Hold on, Tony; I'm coming back to you!" screamed Ferdinand to him. He did not speak again, for he wanted to save all his breath. The water was mounting higher and higher round poor Tony, and by the time Ferdinand did at last get up to him his position was more than dangerous.

"Now let go," said the bigger boy. "Drop quietly into the water, and don't struggle. If you leave yourself to me, I'll save you; if you struggle, we'll both be drowned."

"But swim the short way back, Fernie. Don't go that dreadful, dreadful long way!" called out Tony, in a voice of terror.

"Little goose! drop into the water, and do as you are bid," thundered Ferdinand.

His tone frightened poor Tony into obedience. He slid a little off the rock; Ferdinand raised his right hand, and gave him a helping push.

"That's right; now turn on your back, and shut your eyes, and leave yourself to me. Remember, if you struggle I shall have to give you a blow on your head to keep you quiet; so you know what to expect."

Ferdinand now began to swim slowly back to shore, using one arm as a paddle to help himself along, while the other supported poor little Tony. He had secured the only possible chance of safety by taking the larger swim through comparatively smooth water, but so terrible a strain did he put upon himself in his effort to reach the shore, that when at last he succeeded in landing himself and his little cousin, the brave fellow fainted away. Perhaps it was this fact which roused poor Tony more than anything else.

Fright and love for Ferdinand lent wings to his little cold feet. He rushed across Half-Moon Bay, scrambled up the plateau, and certainly made a startling effect when, looking like a drowned rat himself, he screamed out to Bell and Rachel that Ferdinand was lying as if dead on the beach.

It took Bell scarcely any time to rush back with Tony. She did not wait to ask him any questions, her light quick footsteps soon carried her over the ground, and when Ferdinand, weak and dizzy, sat up and looked around him, Bell flung her arms round his neck.

"Oh, how cold I am!" he said, and his teeth chattered. Just then something very warm touched his hand. It was Mungo's little red tongue. He was licking the cold hand all over, and seeing approval in Isabel's eyes, he leaped forward and performed the same operation on Ferdinand's face.

"Really, Mungo, I never knew how restoring your warm little tongue could be," said Ferdinand. "I'm all right now," he added, jumping to his feet; "only, Tony, you really must not play pranks of this kind another time."

"I didn't play any pranks," said Tony, in an injured voice. "I had got such a lovely pool, and the fish were beginning to bite. It was those horrid wicked waves that would come and shut away the bit of land between me and the shore."

"Yes, dear," said Isabel. "It's a custom with waves to come back to their old playground after a certain number of hours. Now we won't say any more. Fernie, you must have a good warm by the fire, which fortunately blazes away as jolly as possible, and while you are drying your wet things I'll go and catch some fish for dinner."

By this time it was nearly high tide, but Bell, who was a very skilful little fisher, managed not only to land two or three rather tasteless fish, but also she discovered what she thought a greater prize: two large warm turtles' eggs, which were half buried in the sand. These she boiled in the precious little tin kettle, and gave to Ferdinand for his dinner.

"Yes, you must eat both," she said. "The fish will do for us."

The tide was now turning, and the children

knew that by the time they had finished dinner and washed up and packed their crockery they might begin to start on their journey to the Bay of Isabel.

The poor little *Nancy* brig was nowhere to be seen, and Ferdinand said that it must have been washed out to sea, and they should never behold it again. The oars, however, and the planks which had been used for seats, were found on the beach, and these Fernie fastened securely together, as well as all the broken wood and dry tinder they could collect.

"Half-Moon Bay has one advantage over the Bay of Isabel," he remarked. "This plateau contains fuel to last us for some time; we must take away enough now to build a large fire on the beach to-night, and to-morrow, if necessary, I must come back to fetch more."

It was in the following order the children started on their journey to the Bay of Isabel: Mungo went first, leading the way. He carried in his mouth two or three long sticks, which nothing would induce him to drop, for he had the greatest possible desire to be useful, and always made himself so to the very best of his small ability. Following Mungo came Isabel, who carried the picnic basket fastened securely between her shoulders, and a good supply of dry chips and small branches of wood in her apron. Rachel's apron was also piled up with bits of stick and touchwood. Tony carried the carpenter's tools, and Ferdinand came last, dragging after him a mighty bundle of wood and branches of trees, all fastened together with the famous coil of rope which poor Jim Salter had left on board the *Nancy* brig.

The tide was now far enough out to enable the children to walk round the point of the bay with ease, and they began a somewhat weary march over the pebbly shore. The sun was very hot, and although the sea-breeze somewhat cooled the air, they all felt faint and giddy, and Bell had once to open her basket, and taking out the water-bottle, gave a drink all round from its precious contents.

"I trust we shall find fresh water in the Bay of Isabel," she remarked as she did so. But Ferdinand could satisfy her on this point.

"I saw a stream not far from your bower," he said. "Yes, I am thankful to say we need not fear about water. This island, whatever its other defects, seems to have a plentiful supply."

The little party now moved forward again, and in good time, without any fresh adventures, reached the Bay of Isabel. It was now Bell's turn to make herself busy. She took the lead at once as housekeeper-in-chief, and gave, as a good housewife, plain directions to all the others.

"Ferdinand, do you see that dry, brown, vegetable-looking stuff over there? I don't know what it is, but do you see it, just on that little rise to your left?"

"Yes," said Ferdinand; "it seems to be a lot of long withered grass."

"And there is a good quantity of it," resumed Bell, in her most business tones.

Ferdinand stared at her in some surprise.

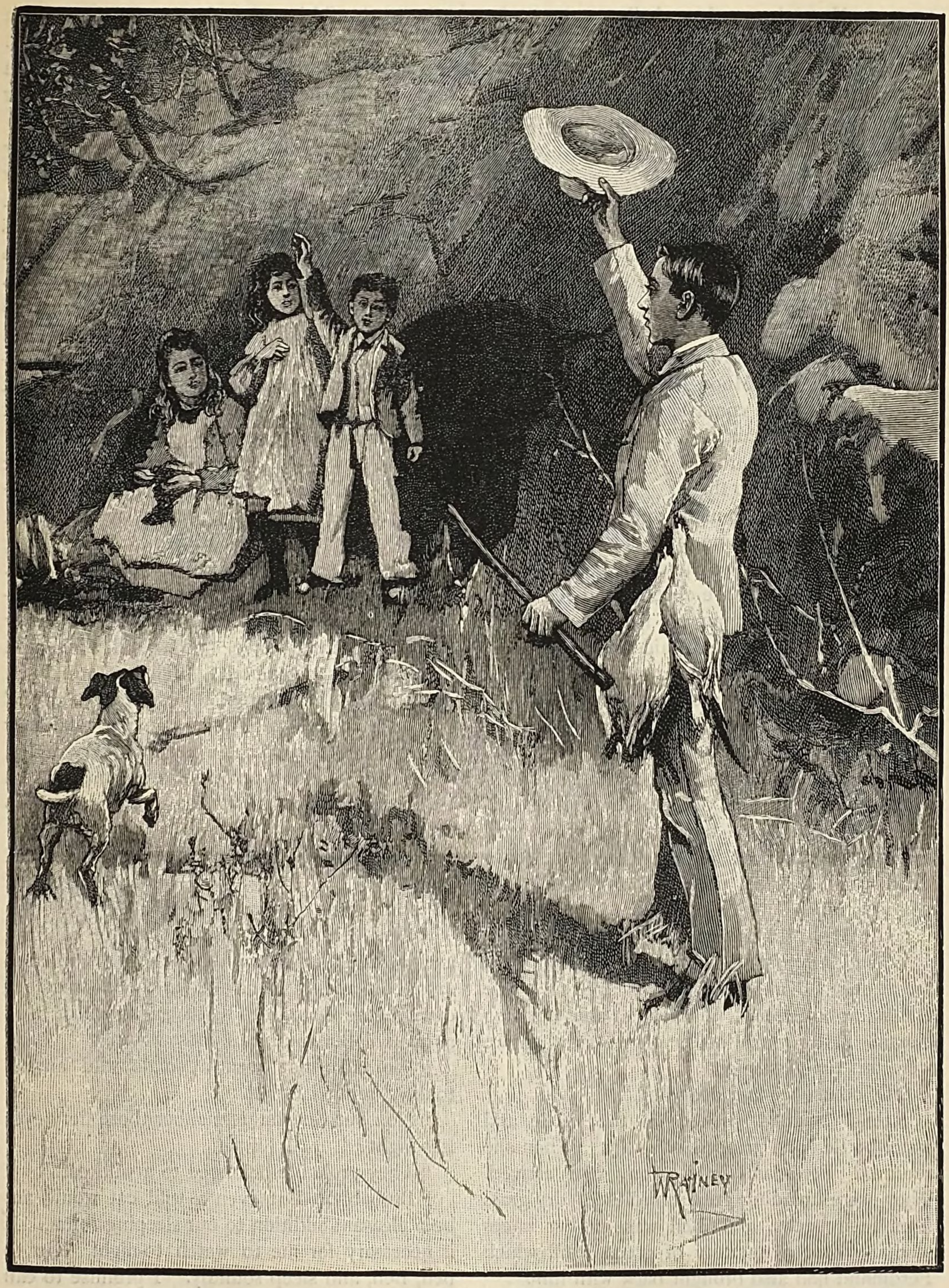
"Well, yes," he answered: "there seems to be about an acre or two. But what are you talking about, Isabel? That uninteresting-looking grass does not appear to me to be an inviting article of food."

"No," replied Bell. "But if it turns out to be dry and soft, it can make a very comfortable bed for us to lie on. And I want you and Tony to go at once, and cut as much as ever you can to put upon the floor of the cave."

"Hurrah! What a capital girl you are!" replied Ferdinand. "Come along, Tony man; we'll bring Bell back as much dry sweet hay as ever she wants in an hour or two."

The two boys started off, and Isabel and Rachel explored every inch of the cave, with the aid of Ferdinand's roll of wax taper. It was really a comfortable little room cut out of the solid rock, and without any apparent outlet except by the somewhat small entrance. Through this entrance the sunlight streamed in, and as the fresh air from the sea came in also the little bower was neither cold nor close.

"I don't believe a single troll can disturb us here," said Bell. "Even trolls cannot force their way through solid rock. What a comfort it will be to lie down in safety to-night. Oh, Rachel! do you see that little ledge in the wall of our room? It will hold the contents of the picnic basket to perfection. Will you unpack it, dear, and put them neatly in order? Be as quick as you can, for I must not waste our wax



"A FIND! A FIND!" (*See p.* 263.)

tiper. Now then, what shall we have for supper?"

"What shall we have for supper?" answered Rachel. "You know there's nothing but fish, unless you find some more eggs, which of course you'll give to Fernie."

"Rachel!"

Bell's voice was so sorrowful, and even stern, that the little girl hung her head, and a deep blush covered her face.

"I thought we were none of us going to grumble, Rachie," said Bell. "Now come out into the sunshine, and help me to build up the fire. See, Rachel, how much better off we are here than in Half-Moon Bay. We really have a good view of the country, and to-morrow we can have a long walk, and find out more about where we are. There, do you see that funny creature waddling up there? That *is* a turtle; Fernie shall watch to-night, and follow some of the turtles as they come up to lay their eggs in the sand. So you see there will be plenty for all. Now, is not this fire cheerful? I really feel so tired, that hot as the place is, I am cold."

"So am I tired, too," said Rachel. Then she added, her face flushing prettily, "Bell, I wish you'd forgive me for being such a grumbling girl. I know I'll be much better to-morrow after I've had a good sleep."

"So you will, darling; and although you do grumble now and then, you are a good little girl, and when I see you trying to be brave, and looking cheerful, and helping Tony and Ferdinand and me, I feel proud of you, and I love you very much."

"Oh, Bell! I'd do just anything for you."

"That is right. You shall do something for me at once. Take our precious little tin kettle and water-bottle, and fill them at that running stream. How much better off we are than we were this time last night!"

"Of course we are, dear Bell."

Rachel laughed, picked up the kettle and water-bottle, and tripped off gaily. When she returned Ferdinand and Tony had arrived. They were unlading great bundles of dry grass from their backs, and Bell was on her knees stooping over a quantity of green stuff, which Ferdinand had also brought back with him.

"See, Rachel," she called out excitedly, "these are wild beans, and excellent they will be to eat. Come and help me to shell these pods. We will boil our beans in the kettle. Now you see you will have something besides fish for supper."

Rachel and Tony both seated themselves by Bell's side, and chatted gaily together as they opened the pretty pods of the wild bean. Ferdinand climbed up into the cave with his loads of fragrant dry hay, and Bell went down to the edge of the water with her lines and bait. She landed two or three more of the small trout-like fish which had served for breakfast, and also brought back with her a fair-sized sea-crab, a dainty by no means to be despised. It was cooked in the hot ashes after supper, and served as an excellent ending to the meal.

"And now," said Ferdinand, "the sun is just about to set, and I recommend all tired people to go to sleep. The bedroom is ready, and a dry and fragrant bed awaits them. I shall hang up poor Jim's waterproof cape before the door, so the night air will be kept out of your bedroom. Tony, and Rachel, climb up into your pleasant room at once, and sound sleep and happy dreams to you both! Bell dear, won't you go now with the children? You look so tired."

"And you?" said Bell, glancing anxiously into her brother's face, which was very white, while dark shadows under his eyes made them look larger than usual. "Aren't you coming to bed, too?"

"Impossible! I must sit by the fire and watch."

"But is that necessary?"

"Yes, Bell. We are in a strange country, and we don't know anything about its inhabitants. By-and-by I may make the door of our cave secure enough to resist an attack of wild animals. But to-night I must watch."

"We have not seen a single wild animal to-day," replied Isabel.

"No: but do you remember those fiery eyes last night?"

"They probably belonged to a wild cat."

"Probably. But even a wild cat would not be a pleasant addition to our sleeping room. It is necessary for me to watch to-night. Go to bed, Bell, and sleep soundly. I promise to call you at two o'clock."

Bell did not say any more. She climbed slowly up into Isabel's Bower, and taking off her shoes and stockings, and unplaiting her long fair hair, she lay down by her little cousins.

Ferdinand was alone outside. He built up the fire, saw that he had a good supply of dry wood handy, and then prepared for his night watch. He determined not to be overcome by sleep, and for some time managed to keep himself awake. He had a good deal to think about, and he was anxious to get some turtles' eggs for breakfast. He hoped, if he watched very closely, that he might see some of these great awkward creatures crawling up over the sands to find a place to lay their eggs, but the darkness of the night prevented his being successful. Isabel's Bay was very quiet; the waves only made a lapping and soothing sound. The land-crabs were not troublesome here, as in Half-Moon Bay. Mungo crept up to Ferdinand's side, and slept the peaceful sleep of the faithful dog.

The fire ceased to crackle and blaze: it faded down to a fine deep red glow, and Ferdinand's tired head drooped on his weary breast. He dreamed of England, of his dead mother, of his old home. He was asleep, sound asleep, and it was at that moment that the fiery eyes once more gleamed fiercely a foot or two away, and a stealthy animal prepared to spring.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE REAL MISTRESS OF THE BOWER.

THE spring was made, and the eyes, like balls of living fire, looked right into Ferdinand's face. He had heard no sound, and he still slept on, not knowing anything of the near approach of an enemy. The animal sniffed the air, its long whiskers almost touched Ferdinand's cheek, then it turned, and with graceful velvet tread stepped over the sand, sprang lightly up the rock, and pushing poor Jim Salter's old waterproof cape aside an inch or two, went into Isabel's Bower.

The three children lay sleeping soundly on their bed of dry hay; it would have taken a good deal to rouse them. But when that something came in the shape of a loud sharp bang made by broken crockery, and when that bang was taken up by an echo, not only once, but many times, it was little wonder that Rachel should rouse herself, sit up, and look around her with flushed cheeks and staring eyes.

Within a few feet of her shone two living balls of fire. She uttered shriek after shriek. There was a growl in the corner of the cave, followed by a fierce spitting noise, some more crockery tumbled down and broke, and the eyes vanished.

Rachel's screams not only woke Tony and Isabel, but Mungo, who barked and leaped about wildly. The next instant Ferdinand, white, and full of self-reproach, rushed into the cave.

"Rachel, do stop screaming! Are you all alive? Do be quiet, Rachel. I cannot hear a word while you shout so."

"Yes, we are all alive," answered Isabel, "but we are greatly frightened. There is a wild beast in the cave with us."

"Give me the roll of taper, Bell, and the matches."

Ferdinand did not take a moment in striking a light. The broken crockery lying on the floor showed him that poor little Rachel had not dreamed her terrors.

"We saw two balls of fire!" she said; "and something growled and spit at us. Oh, Ferdinand! do let us get out of this dreadful cave."

"No, don't stir. If you creep up into that corner, you are as safe as anywhere. Mungo, stop barking this minute. Now, Bell, I see that the crockery is broken, but I don't see anything in your bower."

"How wonderful! What can it all mean?"

Bell, who had now risen, and was looking about her as anxiously as her brother, suddenly put her finger to her lips.

"Hush! stay perfectly quiet," she said. "Do you hear that growl?"

"No, Bell, it isn't a growl: it's absolutely a purr. What can be hiding away in our cave?"

"Oh, Ferdinand! it cannot be a tiger?"

"Now, my dear sister—could a tiger hide in this little place?"

NUTTING TIME.

IN and out the trees, there,
Merry voices sound—
Where the bank is steepest,
Ripest nuts are found.

Reach a hand and catch them,
Clusters small and great;
Take care, little maiden,
Set your basket straight.

'Twould not be so pleasant,
Gathering them again,
If they once went spinning
Down the dusty lane.

"For that matter, could anything hide?" answered Bell. "We can see into every hole and cranny. I must say this is a most unpleasant adventure: to feel yourself in the presence of an enemy that you cannot even catch a glimpse of makes one feel very queer."

"Stay still for a moment," said Ferdinand. "Give me the taper. Something is purring close to us: probably a large wild cat."

"But where does the noise come from? It sounds as if it came out of this little shelf where Rachel has put away our crockery."

"Oh, Bell! nearly all our store of china is smashed. Now let me see—the purring noise certainly comes from here—now it has stopped. The creature, whatever it is, hears my footstep."

"Ferdinand, please don't go too near that shelf."

"What can there be to harm me on this shelf, Bell? Stay though. Did you say there were *no* cracks or crannies in this cave?"

"We certainly saw none to-day."

Ferdinand pushed his wax taper forward, so as to throw a strong light on the little shelf. It certainly looked like a shelf, and nothing more. but at that moment, as, bending still more forward, he looked about him carefully, a paw was pushed down from above, and a severe scratch was given to the hand which held the taper.

Instantly Rachel began to scream again, Mungo to bark, and the unseen enemy to growl and spit.

With some alarm Ferdinand raised his head, then drew back out of danger's way with a very real start. Above the shelf was a cranny, small and dark in itself. This cranny Bell and Rachel had overlooked in their careful search the day before. It was impossible to tell how far it went back into the solid rock, but now its darkness was lit up not only by the two large globes of fire, but by several smaller globes, and from many throats came the angry hissing and growling.

"Keep back," said Ferdinand to the others. He held up his taper, and threw what light he could into the cranny.

"As far as I can tell," he said, "our enemy is no more and no less than a large wild cat. Well, Puss, I am glad you are not a more dangerous foe, although you are quite bad enough, and you have as nasty claws as I ever was scratched with. Rachel, be quiet: Puss shan't harm you, and perhaps I can get one of her kittens for you to play with to-morrow."

"Kittens!" said Rachel.

"Yes, of course, there are a lot of kittens here with the old cat. The fact is, this was her palace long before it was ours. She has a right to resent our coming into it."

The idea of kittens did much to restore Rachel's nerves. She got up at once, and would have come too close, if Ferdinand had not held her back.

"Wild cats are very dangerous animals, if you try to go near them," he said. "We must leave Puss in peace: that is plain. Bell, I doubt if it is safe for you and the children to stay any longer in the cave. Oh, I blame myself for this, for I could have prevented Puss's going in if only I had stayed awake."

"I don't mind anything except the loss of our crockery," said Bell. She picked up the fragments sorrowfully as she spoke. "They are past mending," she said, as she placed them in a tidy pile in one corner. "No, Ferdinand, I think the cave is scarcely safe. The night is warm and still; we are better and safer outside with you by the fire."

Bell sighed as she spoke, for she was really very tired, and she felt anxious about Rachel, who was a delicate child, and unaccustomed to the night air. They all felt, however, that to share the same quarters with wild pussy could not be thought of, and accordingly some of the dry hay was removed, and a comfortable bed was made, out of the reach of any sparks from the fire.

The rest of the night was somewhat disturbed, for the children felt too anxious to sleep soundly, and at breakfast-time the next day all four faces showed only too plainly what hardships they had gone through.

After the meal was over, Ferdinand drew Bell aside.

"We can live on fish, and turtles' eggs, and beans," he said, "but we cannot hold out much longer without sleep. Sleep we must; and as all our trouble yesterday failed to get us a good

night, we must search once again for a cave where we can rest without fear."

"But surely, Ferdinand, when wild Puss goes out, as she presently will for breakfast, we have it in our power to take the kittens, and prevent her coming back."

"I doubt it," replied Ferdinand. "I am not sure that it would be easy to catch those fierce little wild kitties; and even if we could do so, we don't know how far that crevice in the rock goes back, nor what other savage creatures may visit us."

Bell sank down on the sand.

"I suppose you are right," she said, "but I own I am too tired to go much further to-day."

"And you shan't, dear; if you will stay here, where you are sheltered by the shadow of the rocks, and will take care of Rachel and Tony, Mungo and I will go and explore on our own account. After all, there is plenty of wood for the fire to-day, and you can have dinner ready for me when I come back."

"But aren't you too tired, Fernie?"

"Not I! The fact is, Bell, I cannot rest until I discover whether we are on an island or not. Now I'll start away before the sun gets too fierce. Come, Mungo."

Ferdinand and the dog started off at a good pace. They soon left the beach, and climbed up on to the higher land, where a rising hillock speedily hid them from view. Bell sighed when she saw the last of her brother's tall slight figure.

"Who could have believed that any children could be placed in such a queer plight within a couple of days?" she thought. "Here are we, cut away from every friend we have in the world, landed on a desert island, whose name even we do not know. Oh, father, father! when you come back and find us gone, what will you do?"

Tears for the first time filled Isabel's eyes. She struggled bravely with her feelings.

"What will become of the others if I give way?" she murmured; and then she rose, and busied herself with the small duties which lay to hand. The fire must not be neglected, and Bell made up her mind that they would draw water and catch fish for dinner before the sun got too hot.

There was now very little china left, the large cup and saucer and a couple of plates being all that wild pussy had seen fit to leave unbroken; but fortunately the precious glass water-bottle had escaped unhurt, and Tony, by Bell's orders, took it away now to fill with clear cold water by the running stream. He came back in great excitement. He had found a large nest of turtles' eggs. These the children carefully collected, and put away for future use. As the patches of wild beans grew near the bay, Rachel and Tony went to gather some, while Bell tended the fire, and took care of what was left of their small property.

When the younger children returned, with quantities of young and tender pods, she said that they should all refresh themselves by a bathe in one of the warm pools which the tide, now at low ebb, had left behind it. Bell told Tony that there was no fear of a shark finding him out here, and the little boy felt all the better after his dip.

Then Isabel proposed a general family wash, and the three table-napkins, all the pocket-handkerchiefs, two tea-cloths, and an old duster were rinsed and rinsed again in the running stream. Without soap or soda, starch, mangle, or irons, the washed articles could not present a very smart appearance, but at least they were cleaner than before, and the hot sun bleached as well as dried them.

"You are capital good children," said Bell; "and now we have done all we need do for the present, so we will sit down and rest. How nice it is in this cool shade! When I have given myself ten minutes of complete idleness I can set to work at father's stockings."

"Bell," said Rachel, "I wish you weren't so fond of work. I don't see why you shouldn't sometimes sit with your hands before you."

"Well, dear, it gives me pleasure to be busy. We each of us have our own ideas of happiness; yours at the present moment is to lie still and dream; mine is to knit father's stockings. Dear father! If he only knew where we are now!"

"Bell," said Tony, after a pause, "I do wish you'd do something for us."

"Well, Tony, what do you want?"

"I have a plan, and so has Rachel. We want to think of a name for this island."

"And," said Rachel, "after we have thought of it we want to make a flag and we want you to embroider our name on it in great big sampler stitches, with some of your red marking-cotton, and then we'll put it on a long pole."

"So that when Uncle Michael comes sailing by, as he's sure to do when he misses us," continued Tony, "he may see the great flag with the red letters, and come in and find us."

"For we don't want to live and die on the island," finally added Rachel, tears in her eyes.

"So please think of a name as soon as ever you can, Bell," said Tony.

"That's an excellent idea," said Bell; "but I don't know that I'm particularly good at thinking of names. And what are we to make the big white flag of?"

"Of the three table-napkins and the two tea-towels sewed together," said Rachel briskly.

Isabel looked very grave.

"Ferdinand said too, that we must put up a flag," she said, "but I did not think all our linen was to go for the purpose. No doubt, though, it is wise that we should try to attract any stray ship which happens to go by."

"Then you will do it, dear Bell?"

"Yes, if Ferdinand wishes it."

Tony clapped his hands, and looked with deep satisfaction at his little sister.

"Let's think of a name while Fernie is away," he said. "Let's have it all ready to tell him the very instant he comes back."

Bell laughed.

"You can suggest anything you like," she said. "Only remember, I am a girl of very few ideas, and I am sure not to think of a pretty name."

"Oh, anything will do," said Tony, kicking the sand about as he spoke. "Call the island, if it is an island, after the trolls."

"The Land of the Little Men," said Bell; "that would be too long a name to work in red sampler-stitch on our flag. No, it must be one big word: of that I am sure; and it must be the sort of word that can be seen a long way off, so that people out at sea may pay attention to it, and come and save us. Now, Rachel, what idea have you?"

Rachel buried her face in her hands and tried hard to think; Tony did likewise. We all know how hard it is to find a suitable name for anything at a moment's notice. Many suggestions were made, but all set aside by Bell. One name was too long, another had no sense. Tony and Rachel, who were longing to see their cousin begin her embroidery, got fidgety and restless. Bell knitted on, she waited for the others to think for her.

Just at that moment a screaming noise was heard in the air, and a great flock of white birds, flapping their wings and uttering harsh shrieks, rose suddenly from some ground near by, and flew directly over the children's heads. Their flight was slow, and some of them were so near the ground that it would have been possible to strike them down while on the wing. The plumage of these birds was pure white, and as they flew several feathers dropped from them. A large one fell into Rachel's lap. She picked it up excitedly.

"Here's our name," she said. "Call our land White Feather. There, Bell, that is almost one word, and if you embroider it in very big red letters on a white ground, it will be seen a long, long way off. Now, won't it, Bell? People will be sure to wonder what White Feather means, so they will come to shore and find out."

Before Isabel could reply a loud shout attracted the attention of all the children, and they saw Ferdinand in the distance running to meet them. He carried something over his shoulder, and waved his cap in the air.

"A find! a find!" he shouted, as he came up to them. "What do you think I have come across now?"

"What, Fernie? Do speak, Fernie!" exclaimed the two younger children.

"Well, it's very good news for us all. Just let me get my breath, and I'll tell you."

"What have you got over your shoulder, Ferdinand?" asked Bell.

"A brace of white birds. I knocked them down quite easily with my stick. We'll have quite a variety in our food to-day, Bell. And now, poor thirsty little ones, here's a treat for you."

He unhooked a great bunch of sweet wild grapes, and tossed them to the children as he spoke.

"You can eat as much as you like," he said. "There are lots more where these came from. And now for my news."

"Oh, Fernie, you do excite us! Do please, please tell us quickly. Is it a ship coming to take us away?" asked Rachel in her most restless manner.

"No, little one; you must wait for that. But now I'll give you my adventures as quickly as I can. When I left you, I thought I would make for the highest point of land within reach, for I wanted to be quite sure if we were really on an island. The grass was frightfully slippery, but I managed to crawl up on my hands and knees to the top of a sort of sugar-loaf mountain. There I looked round me, and saw that we had landed on an island from three to four miles long, I should think, and shorter across—quite a small place, covered with lots of trees towards the centre, and very rugged and wild everywhere. There were steep mountains too, and deep valleys. I saw that we'd have to be very careful how we walked, for there's something in the nature of the grass, and the ground is so slippery, so uneven, and the paths wind about so quickly that in a moment you find yourself on the edge of a precipice."

"Jolly!" exclaimed Tony, his eyes sparkling. "I love precipices."

"Then, my boy," said Ferdinand, "your peculiar tastes are likely to be gratified on this island. However, to get on with my story. After I had climbed to the top of the Sugar-Loaf, and taken a good look all round, I thought the best and safest way to get back to the shore was to slide down on my hands and knees. As to poor Mungo, he simply tumbled head over heels the greater part of the way. I landed at last, after a great many bumps, on the edge of another deep bay, and, Bell, what do you think I saw there? High and dry, up above high-water mark, the hull of quite a good-sized vessel. There it was, stranded, and there, for aught anyone can tell, it has been for many years. I went on board and down into the cabins. Not a soul could I see, not even the trace of a human being, but—Bell, Tony, and Rachel, I found something else."

"What, what?" they all cried restlessly.

"Why, a home—a home all prepared for us to live in, furniture, beds, pots and pans, crockery—Oh! everything that the most particular could desire. There they were, not even mouldy, for the climate is so dry. Bell, we can all sleep in the cabin of that queer stranded ship to-night. We can fasten ourselves in securely, and neither wild cats nor trolls need trouble us."

"Oh, hurrah, hurrah!" said Tony. "Let us start off at once, and see our lovely new house."

"We will have dinner first," said practical Bell.

(To be continued.)

PERT AND THE FLIES.

FULL of play is our "Miss Pert,"
Full of mischief, full of fun;
Watching with her ears and eyes
For a game with anyone.

She is everybody's pet,
Saucy little loving thing;
She is smart and clever too,
She can carry, fetch, and bring.

Once she chanced to find a bone,
Licked her lips at such a prize;
But alas! to taste it too
Quickly came four big blue flies.

Buzz, buzz, buzz! Oh, what a stir!
Stares with open eyes Miss Pert,
Half in wonder, half in fear—
Will those noisy creatures hurt?

Never saw our pet before
Such alarming frightful things;
Goggle eyes, and hairy legs,
Bodies blue, and humming wings.

Doggie, puzzled by the flies,
Can't her foolish mind make up;
So with tail between her legs,
Runs away—the silly pup!

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

PUZZLED. (*See p.* 264.)

TEE-TO-TUM TALES.

By LUCY FARMER, *Author of "The Little Folks' Peep Show," "The Chronicle of Cardewe Manor," &c.*

IV.—PRICE'S STORY OF AN ADVENTURE IN AFRICA.

WHO would have thought that after such a lovely day on the sands we should have had a wet day next? I am sure none of our party were prepared for rain; and when we looked out before breakfast, a dull leaden sky and thick mist absorbed every detail of the landscape.

"Bother the rain," said rude Bobby. "Why will it come just now?"

"You are a very ungrateful and a very silly boy, Bobby," I said. "Hold your tongue, please. The idea of you wishing to order the weather to suit yourself? Ridiculous!"

"I'm sure a nasty mist like this can do no one good," he muttered. "Even the hens don't like it, and I'm better than them!"

"'Than *they*,' is grammar," remarked Annie severely. "'Than them' is very common."

"Oh! don't bother, Annie. Go to bed, or out of the room. Well, here's breakfast, anyway, and I believe the fog is rising!"

This suspicion comforted him for a while, but we had a very quiet morning. We could not venture out in such a thick drizzle, and there was no amusement indoors until Annie began to try to make a sketch of the Tee-to-tum Rock, and then the rest began to draw.

The morning passed thus, but fortunately about one o'clock the clouds began to rise, and fold up over the sea. Then a breeze came off the water, and by dinner-time the sun was trying to peep out, with a very dim and watery eye, from behind the leaden-coloured clouds. But he prevailed, and gradually sparkled out at sea far away. Then he lighted up some vessels' sails beautifully; then he shone on the pier, and finally on the beach and on the rippling waves, warmed the cliffs, and flashed on the panes of glass in the terrace houses.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Bob, "there's the old sun! Come out, girls, come out, it's fine and bright. We'll see old Price."

"That will be nice!" cried Ethel.

"A rhyme," cried Annie. "'It will be nice to see old Price.' That will do capitally. May we go out, Mrs. Farmer?"

"Yes, dears: as soon as you please. I daresay we shall find Price on the pier now, as the boats are going out."

In ten minutes all were ready, and we set out at once to watch the fishing-boats put off to sea. On the pier we met Price, and had some conversation with him. He seemed sad, and we asked if he had heard bad news.

"Not for myself, ma'am: but for my mate Joseph Hardy, whose nevvy—(nephew, you say?)—well, whose nephew is dead, ma'am, all along o' some savages. He was coming home a while ago, invalided; but something struck him, and now he has died!"

"Was he a sailor?" asked Bobby gently.

"Yes, master, and he saved his captain's and his officers' lives, he did. He was a fine fellow was Edward: that was his name."

"Can you tell us about him?" suggested Ethel, after a pause. "We like to hear of brave sailors."

"Well, if ye like, missie: it can't harm us to tell of good deeds, though the heart aches, I do assure ye, ma'am. Here it is.

"Edward was on the *Circe* frigate on the coast of Africa, preventing slave-trade. Well, one day the captain takes a couple of officers and a gig to go ashore. He lands, and sends word up to the king of the country that he was coming to pay a call on him. The officers were in full-dress: very grand, and very hot. Two sailors went with them. The others, all but Edward, came ashore and rested. He remained in the boat, just outside the rollers—or waves—rolling and rocking until the captain returned to the landing-place.

"The king of the country was a cruel man; and he did not like the English interfering with the slaves, for whom he got a great deal of

money. So he had made up his mind to kill the captain and officers while pretending to be friendly. This king's name was Barroo-Barroo."

"What a funny name," said Annie.

"That was it, missie; he had given orders that as the officers all went back they were to be killed by black men who were hiding near the beach. The sailors were first to be killed, or captured.

"These bad black men gave the sailors something pleasant to drink, and when they all lay down to sleep under the shade of the trees, the treacherous fellows seized them all. One poor sailor gave the alarm, and shouted out 'treachery,' but he was speared, and then only Edward in the boat was left free. He had seen the natives creep out, but did not imagine that they were enemies until it was too late.

"When he saw the blacks tying up the sailors, he tried to row away; but he could not. The natives threw spears at him as soon as he sat up: so he had to pretend to be wounded; and he lay down in the boat, hoping that the people on board the frigate, *Circe*, would come to his rescue. He could not loose the boat, because if he did he would be driven on shore; and there he lay rocked by the waves.

"The watchmen on board very fortunately saw the lad waving his arms, and told an officer. After a while a boat was sent off with armed sailors; but as the ship had anchored a long way off, this boat could not arrive for some time. All this while the black men were in hiding, waiting to attack the officers, and Edward was greatly puzzled. How could he warn them?

"The black men remained in hiding, and it all happened as the cruel king had intended, so far; but he had not counted on the young sailor in the boat. The blacks saw that their plan might be discovered, so they sent two of their number to swim off to the boat, and catch Edward. He saw them approaching, and at once cut the rope which moored the boat: then he got an oar out over the stern, and sitting down, out of sight, rowed the boat very slowly away. He soon saw that he could not escape the quick swimmers, and prepared to defend himself."

"What did he do?" asked Bobby, as Price paused a moment.

"He got some of the ropes in the boat, and made two running nooses. When the negroes came near he defended himself with an oar, and partly disabled one man. In a moment he turned to the other and threw the rope over his head, pulled it tight, and nearly choked him. The black pulled and tugged in vain: he could not get free; and in his struggles towed the boat away. Edward easily secured the other man in the same manner, and, standing up, punished them both with a boat-hook when they tried to get into the gig; but he was wounded in the struggle.

"The other black men on shore were very angry, and as the boat was drifting in they ran down to seize Edward. Fortunately he caught sight of his officers on a small hill on their way down, and screamed and whistled with all his might. The officers on board the man-of-war, being on the look-out, fired a gun, and ran up a signal meaning—

"*Take care: treachery ashore!*

"Meantime the other boat was approaching.

"Edward saw that his warnings had been understood. The captain saw the signal, and with his officers prepared to fight. They drew their revolvers and made ready to resist the black men who intended to attack them. But when they saw the other armed boat with marines in it, and heard the gun fired, they became frightened and pretended to be friendly. They quickly left the sailors in the wood, and ran away as hard as they could. So when the captain and his officers, with the king's escort, came to the clump of trees, they found the sailors bound: one man had been wounded; Edward was in the boat, and two half-dead black men in the water.

"The escort pretended to be very angry with the treacherous blacks, their friends; but the officers were not deceived. They heard all the adventure from the sailors, one of whom had been speared. So they took the black men in the water prisoners, and gave them both a flogging on board. Then they sent a message to the king, and he, being very much frightened, promised to punish his treacherous men, although he himself had told them to do as

they had done. I believe he killed them when he found them, in order to pacify the captain, and sent many presents of value to the ship, pretending great regret and sorrow! As the sailor who was speared did not die, the captain did not burn the king's village, as he had intended to do; but he took care to be on his guard always afterwards.

"Edward was rewarded; he was promoted in the ship, and received a very handsome present. The captain wrote home about him, and all his messmates cheered him when he was thanked on the quarter-deck by the captain. He was a fine fellow; but he did not live very long. The wound he had received in the boat turned out badly; fever set in, and though it was thought he would recover, the climate was too deadly. He gradually sank and died, poor fellow, after he was invalided home. It seems very hard, but after all, ma'am, and young master, you will say that he died for doing his duty like a British sailor. That's what makes me out of sorts a bit, too; for he was killed by treachery, not in fair battle; but he did his duty noble!"

Price touched his hat and walked away. We were all rather quiet, and turned homewards talking of Edward, until the welcome appearance of the two cousins sent the young people racing along the beach, hoping for some other adventure.

TWO LITTLE PEOPLE.

THERE once was a girl, I've been told,
A little girl just three years old,
Who could not be spared, so her mother declared,
For at least twice her weight in pure gold.

And there once was a boy, so they say,
Who was fond as he could be of play,
Yet again and again he would help wind a skein—
Just look!—in the steadiest way.

Now these two little people, you see,
Both as busy as busy can be;
The best little pair to be found anywhere,
As I think you will surely agree.

A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY.

A TALE OF TOPSY-TURVYDOM.

BANG, bang! creak, creak!

"Good gracious," I thought, "what, morning already!"

Creak, creak, creak! I actually found myself standing upright in bed; and fearing lest I should be turned quite over, I hastily jumped off, and watched the bed gradually sinking back to its accustomed position.

"That's Jack's doing!" I exclaimed, remembering that my sailor brother had come back only yesterday; "but I'll be even with him!"

It was such a joyful day—August 1st, Prize-giving day! No lessons—only two hours at the school altogether, and then holidays in real earnest—so I forgave Jack on the spot. All the same, I couldn't make things out.

Sarah, that crustiest of cooks, who always scowled when I took my bicycle through the kitchen, met me with a smiling face at the breakfast-room door, and said—

"Oh, Master Cyril, I've made you some hot toast, and I'm just going to put a jam omelet into the pan for you. I've been cleaning your bicycle, and I want you to look nice to-day."

I think you might have knocked me down with a straw when I heard that, and my power of speech was so completely taken away that I didn't even say "Thank you."

I had hardly commenced my omelet when a strange sight caught my astonished gaze.

There, straight before me in the garden, was our pussy, Tabby-Cat-o'-nine-Lives we called her, from the number of remarkable deliverances she had had from our bulldog, Chunk-o'-Chops, prancing round the foot of the cherry-tree, looking with longing eyes up into the tree, and making futile efforts to climb up the trunk.

And, lo and behold! there was her constant oppressor, Chunk-o'-Chops the valiant, who had fought pitched battles with—

> "Mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
> And curs of low degree,"

and was the victor of a hundred skirmishes; there was that courageous, not to say ferocious, animal trembling—yes, he was distinctly and positively trembling—far away up in the cherry-tree, and looking with fear and horror on Tabby-Cat-o'-nine-Lives on the cabbage-bed below.

When I turned away from this marvellous sight, I saw cook standing in the front garden with my bicycle, and the clock was striking. "'Tis nine o'clock already," I murmured. I listened a moment and heard the clock strike no fewer than thirty-three times! "Well," I thought, "that must be one of those new-fangled clocks, which go up to twenty-four instead of twelve, and, if so, surely that would make it nine o'clock to-morrow." But I hadn't time to think it out, as I wished to retain cook's good opinion, and have another jam omelet; so I dashed out of the house, banging the door, I'm sorry to say, as I usually do.

But this morning it happened that, instead of making that tremendous noise which papa says gives him such a terrible shock, the door rebounded as if on a piece of india-rubber, and sent me flying full tilt into Sarah's arms.

The poor woman gasped for breath a minute or two, and then exclaimed, "Oh, Master Cyril, you're so playful and high-spirited, and you do make me so glad and merry!" and therewith she began laughing heartily.

"I do think things are bewitched to-day," I said to myself; "but, if so, may they long continue!"

Then I vaulted into the saddle, and, thinking I'd fall in with the humours of the day, started the machine backwards, and somehow it went even faster and straighter than I had ever known it go before.

And, strangely enough, all the other fellows were going backwards on their cycles too, whilst everybody was as polite to us schoolboys as if we had been young princes out for a holiday. It was such a remarkable thing to see the park-keeper, who had so often given us boys chase for trampling on the flower beds, standing at the gates, and taking off his hat, with a cheerful smile, to each one of us as we scudded through his domains backwards at the rate of about sixteen miles an hour, whilst staring him in the face was a big notice-board stating that it was strictly forbidden for cyclists to ride through the park at a higher rate of speed than eight miles an hour.

The policeman, too, who had looked very solemnly at me ever since the evening when he had found me riding without a light, was dancing and circling about in a most extraordinary manner. But he stopped a minute, and called out that he was glad to see us enjoying ourselves in such merry fashion; and that puzzled me more than the park-keeper, as I had just ridden over his foot, and by the pained expression which swept across his face I could tell he hadn't enjoyed it.

So I thought, just to make sure of the day, I would ask the policeman. "What day is it, X 232?" I shouted.

"The thirty-second of July, your honour," he replied, bowing very low.

That was a puzzler worse than anything that had gone before. I had never heard of that day being put in the calendar, but I supposed that since we lost eleven days in the reign of George II. we had somehow gained a day, and they did not know how to use it up, so they put it in as July 32nd.

I don't understand that," I said; "is there any other name?"

"Yes," he replied, "it's Hey-diddle-diddle day."

And thereupon he began to caper about like a madman.

"You'll get tired if you go on like that," I said.

"But I must," he replied; "I've got to dance round this park 366 times before 22 o'clock, and there are three burglars and four tramps set to watch that I do every step of it," and off he danced as quickly as his legs would carry him.

When I got down to the school the entrance didn't seem quite familiar. There was the sign which told us boys the proper entrance for cyclists written as large as life, "NI YAW." "That's a funny-looking sign ! I wonder," thought I, "if 'tis Latin"—however, before I had time to remember what was the best method of expressing "Way In," I was lost in wonder at the sight which presented itself on the playground.

The senior boys were all assembled on the school meadow, which is the pride of every Brightwickian, having a grand cricket practice, and there were all the masters scudding about for the balls, as if their lives depended on it.

Yes, the masters ! Those very masters who but twenty-four hours since had held us all, as it were, under their thumbs.

"Get along there, lazy-bones !" I heard one of the sixers roar out to a boy just by me. I paused, and glanced for a moment at the fellow, and—yes, there could be no mistake—it was the Head Master himself, his face pale with fear, and, without a word, he dashed after the cricket ball at such a pace as I never saw equalled in any race, before or since.

Then one of the fourth form boys called out to the sixer, "Don't be so hard on the poor little chap—he's been fagging for just on an hour as hard as he can. Now you run yourself and get that !" he exclaimed, hitting a ball right to the boundary ; and, though he looked a little sulky, away went the sixer (that's a sixth form boy, you know—one of the heads of the school) at a rattling pace.

The next thing I saw was one of the juniors go up to the master of my form, and, knocking off his cap, exclaim—

Now, Jones, what are you gaping at? After that ball, sharp!" The master gave an appealing look to me, but started off at a gallop. When he came back, he said to me in an undertone—

"You were bottom boy yesterday, weren't you?"

"I was," I answered.

"That's all right," he said, with intense satisfaction. "You are bottom boy in the lowest class. Then to-day you are ruler of the whole school, for everything is topsy-turvy on this dreadful 32nd of July."

"Oh, ho !" I said joyfully. "Is that it? Well, you've often been good to me, so I'll let you off easy anyhow, and if you stick to me you shall have as many jam tarts as you can possibly eat. But we'll soon see if what you say is right, and if it is we'll have such a prize-giving as will astonish Brightwick for many a day to come."

"Boys!" I called out, and I found my voice ringing like a thunder-clap, "all of you come here."

Everyone stopped playing, as if by magic, and ran towards me. I noticed particularly as they came up that the juniors were teasing the elder boys, and those latter in turn were cuffing the masters.

"Now, my lads," I said, when they had all gathered round me ; "we're going to have a jolly day ; but don't bully the masters and don't torment the seniors. The first thing to do is for the masters to go to the tuck-shop, and bring all the buns, cakes, ices, jam tarts, and sweets out here. I'll treat the lot of you. Then, when you've eaten as much as you like, we'll give away the prizes. They will go to the three bottom boys in each class, for you see, as they are lowest down, they will want something to console them. I am the lowest down in the whole school, and therefore I shall take the two best prizes."

There was a tremendous shout of applause, and the masters dashed off towards that palace of delights where chocolate creams, caramels, bulls'-eyes, and brandy-balls lie almost hidden by tarts, cakes, buns, and biscuits of the choicest description. Other masters ran towards the school to bring out the prizes.

In a few minutes all the boys were eating the goodies, and I had just selected for myself a magnificent silver cup, and a beautifully bound volume, when a boy came running to me, and said, in a voice trembling with fear—

"The enemy is on us !"

"Who ?" I asked in astonishment.

"The boys from the Prep. are coming across, looking horribly fierce. They'll give us a fearful thrashing, for eating up all the tarts."

It was too true !

There were the boys from the Preparatory School—the little fellows who but yesterday we regarded with hearty contempt—close upon us and looking most ferocious. I tried to fly, but I found myself rooted to the spot.

I tried to shout, but——

* * * * *

"Now then, Cyril, you'll never be at school in time; why 'tis a quarter past eight, and you have to be there at nine!"

And, with that, Jack pulled me up and shook me lustily. "Oh, Jack!" I cried, rubbing my eyes, "is that really you? What day of the month is it?" I gasped.

"Why, the 1st of August, to be sure."

"Oh, thanks; all right. You're sure it isn't the 32nd of July?"

"The 32nd of July! Ho! ho!" and Jack laughed heartily. "Whoever heard of that day in the calendar, I should like to know?"

"*I* have," I said; and then I told him my dream.

F. J. Cross.

LEARNT IN A BATH.

EVERYONE knows the word "Eureka" nowadays, but I wonder whether any of you know the meaning of that word, and the cause of its being so famous?

Eureka means simply *I have found it*, and it was made famous in this way. There was once a Tyrant or ruler of Syracuse whose name was Hiero. One day he gave some gold to a man, and ordered him to make a crown of it. When the crown was sent home, Hiero looked at it, and was quite sure from its lightness that all the gold had not been used. He thought, in fact, that the workman had cheated him by taking away some gold, and putting some other metal to it to make up the size required.

Hiero sent at once for Archimedes, who was a very clever man, and asked him to help him find out what had been done. Of course this would be easy enough now, for we have proper means for testing whether a thing is made of pure metal or not; but in those days, about two hundred years before Christ came into the world, the only plan they knew of was to melt it down, which Hiero did not wish to do.

The king knew exactly what was the weight of the gold he had given to the workman, but he knew too that a pound of silver would be larger in size than a pound of gold, and it would be easy for any dishonest person to put silver instead of gold, and yet make the crown as big as it had been ordered.

Archimedes and Hiero put their heads together, but it was no good: they could not think of any plan for finding out the workman's trick, and Archimedes was at last obliged to own himself beaten.

There is an old saying that if you want to find something you have lost, you ought to begin by looking in the most unlikely places; and Archimedes found out this problem in the most unlikely place of all, I should say. He was just stepping into his bath one day when he noticed that as the bath was very full, the water ran over the top to make room for his body.

"Eureka!" he exclaimed. "I have found it. Supposing anything the same size as my body were put in the bath, the same quantity of water would run over, even if the substance were only half the weight. It is size, not weight, that will send the water over."

He jumped out at once, and went home to try experiments, still exclaiming "Eureka!" in his delight.

He took a lump of gold and a lump of silver, each weighing exactly the same as the crown, and having filled a vessel carefully with water, he put the silver in, and noticed exactly how much water flowed over. Filling the vessel up again, he plunged in the gold, and found that less water ran over. Then he took the crown itself, and put it in the brimming bath. Less water ran over than when the pure silver lump went in, but more water than when the gold was immersed.

So by thinking this out, you will see that the workman had made the crown not of pure gold nor of pure silver, but of a mixture of the two.

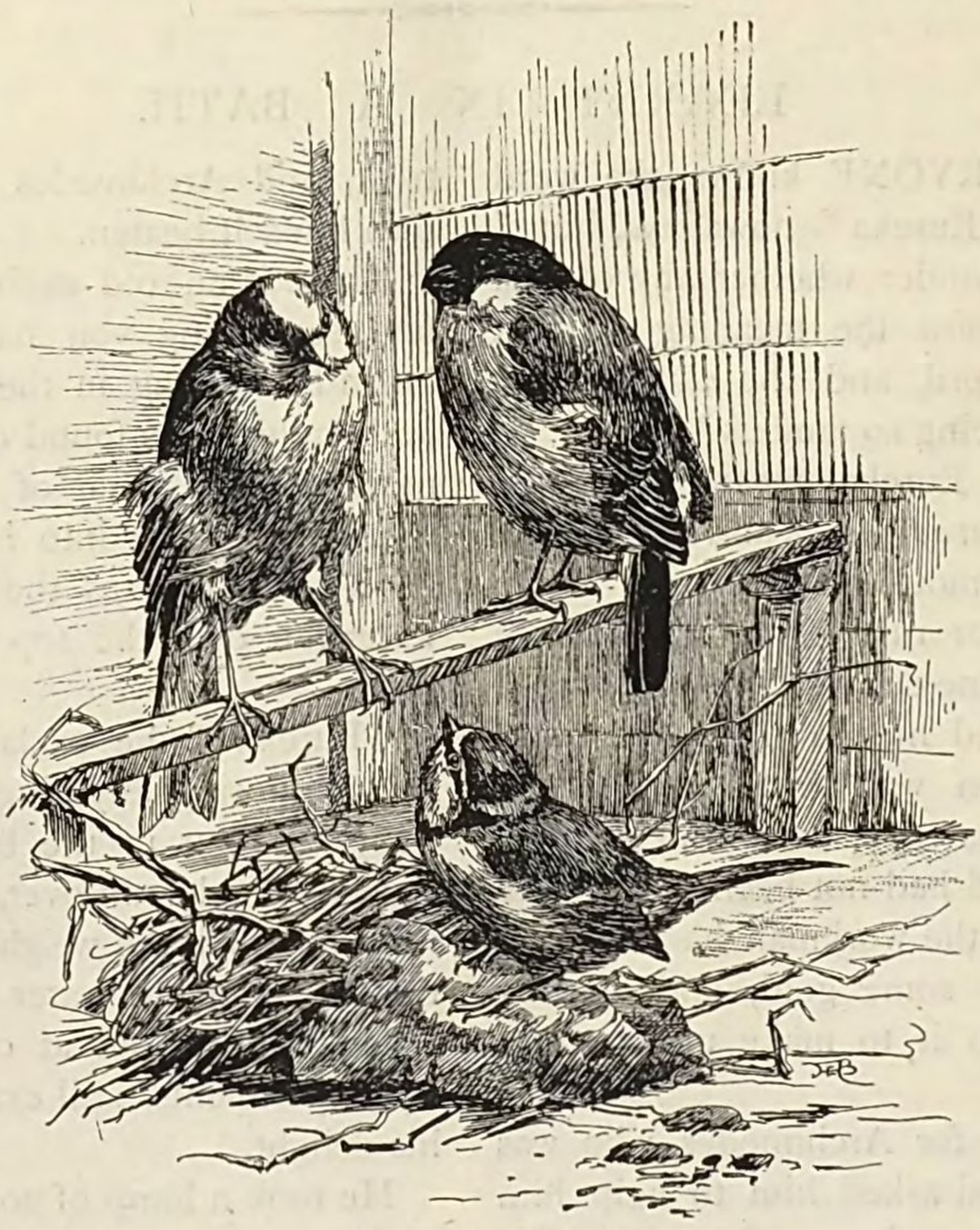
Hiero was so pleased with Archimedes for finding this out that he said he should believe whatever he told him after that.

THE FAITHFUL FINCHES:

WITH A GLANCE AT THE GOOSE, THE HEN, AND THE DUCKLINGS.

GIRLS and boys who keep birds do not need to be told that many of their pets are affectionate little things. Sometimes their kindness is shown to one another: sometimes it is their mistress or master that arouses their love.

When a bird has no young ones of her own, she will often "adopt" the young ones of another—she will become their foster-mother — frequently, as in the case of the cuckoo, against her will. A lady once kept a number of canaries and other song birds in a cage together. Amongst them was a bullfinch that took a great fancy for some half-grown canaries that had been put into the cage.



"A QUIET GOSSIP."

What was the cause of this friendship it would be hard to say; for, of course, the owner of the small aviary would not have allowed the young canaries to starve. Anyhow, she was spared all trouble in the matter, for Mistress Bully took the yellow-coats under her special care. At times, a canary and the finch might be seen sitting on a spar side by side, as if in the enjoyment of a quiet gossip, while another canary stood on the floor, glancing upwards with a knowing look, and throwing in some twitter-talk every now and then.

Mrs. Bully had her hands full, if I may say so, at meal hours, for then all the canaries wanted to be fed at once, and this was not possible to a poor mother bird that had only one bill. But she managed to feed them in turns, with a twist of her head that seemed to say, "One at a time, please"; and although her own appetite was doubtless as good as theirs, the faithful creature never attempted to satisfy her hunger until the wants of her clamorous charges had been satisfactorily met. Not that the canaries were ever afraid of their black-headed friend, or even sulky. On the contrary, they were delighted — as well they might be—with her devotion to them, and the bullfinch could not have been prouder of the little family if they had been her own chicks.

When a hen hatches ducks' eggs and brings up a brood of ducklings, you have an instance of foster-motherhood that is by no means rare. Indeed, it will be worth your while to watch a case of this kind, should you ever have the chance. Of course there comes a time when the ducklings take to the water naturally, and you must keep your eye on the hen the first day her young friends make for the pond. Her distress and astonishment will be well marked.

The late Rev. J. G. Wood mentioned a singular example of a number of ducklings that had two foster-mothers. As a rule, when two birds propose to take the same brood under their protection, there is a quarrel, and then a fight for the sole charge of the fledglings. But in this case the goose and the hen—the foster-mothers in question—were much more sensible, and settled the matter in a friendly way.

It was agreed that during the time the ducklings were ashore they were to be under the care of the hen, while the goose was to look after them when they spent the shining hours on the water. By-and-by, however, the hen seems to have thought that they were too often and too long afloat, and it was finally arranged that both birds were to superintend them, whether on land or on water. And how did the hen always obtain her share in the governance? When the ducklings went into the pond, she sat herself on the goose's back, and in this easy and comfortable position was carried about in the wake of her web-footed pets. This practice was repeated day after day, until the ducklings were old enough to do without the services of both guardians.

The finches appear to be all amiable and unselfish little birds. We have seen how a bullfinch befriended some motherless canaries, but it is said that "something to love" is almost a necessary of life to the goldfinch.

"'ONE AT A TIME, PLEASE'" (*p.* 272).

A lady once owned one that never saw her leave its presence without trying to get out of its cage to accompany her. On her return it hailed her with every sign of joy, and whenever she came up to it, gestures failed it wherewith to show its delight. If she offered her finger, it was caressed with low fond cooings or murmurs of gladness; and so exactly did the faithful finch know its fair friend, that when she gave it another person's finger instead of her own, the bird pecked at it angrily, while if she placed her own finger between two of this other person's, Goldy told the difference at once, and fondled the right one.

The goldfinch is a great favourite, and in its captivity it is taught a variety of pleasant tricks. It will draw its water in a tiny wee bucket, and if you supply it with a mirror you will provide it with an endless source of amusement. But you must not think that the bird is vain because it spends so much time in front of the glass. As Mr. Broderip explained it, the plumage of the male and female being almost alike, the latter being only a little less brilliant, the caged goldy daily deludes himself into thinking that the figure in the mirror is his mate—whom really he will never see again—come to pay him a visit. Since the harmless cheat affords the goldfinch such gratification, let no one grudge the little fellow the luxury of a looking-glass.

Nor are the finches without honour as singing birds, although they seem to be more prized on the Continent than in England. The peasants of Thuringia and the district of the Harz mountains in Germany are said to be passionate lovers of the chaffinch's song. They have been known to deny themselves everything but the barest necessaries of life, until they have saved enough money to buy a bird with a choice note, and having obtained possession of it, hardly any price will tempt them to part with their treasure. To purchase a fine songster they will even sell the family cow. They will walk miles to hear a strange bird sing, and when the voice of the chaffinch is heard in the land then the heart of these simple kindly-natured folk rejoices.

There is a proverb that tells us that old birds are not to be caught with chaff, but this finch would seem to be an exception to that excellent rule, for it gets its name from the fact that it is fond of chaff.

STORIES OF THE UNEXPECTED.

IV.—A TUB, A LAMP, AND A PARSLEY LEAF.

WE had plenty of time to prepare for our next tableaux, and father was going to help us; so we made up our minds to do two or three, and not to trouble Uncle George a bit. In fact, having got his permission to borrow anything we liked from the housekeeper, we informed him he was not to go near the stage or stage-door all day.

We had rather a difficulty about arranging our first scene. We wanted some water to imitate a spring dropping from a bank. We managed it at last, with half a broken jug. This was laid on its side and covered entirely with dried moss, and Jack stood behind the scene with a small water-can in his hand, out of which he let the water drop slowly into the jug.

"For pity's sake, don't laugh when you are doing it," said Charlie, "or you will swamp the stage."

We put a tray down on the ground, also covered with moss, and we reckoned that if Jack regulated his supply properly we could let the curtain stay up just sixty seconds; if his hand shook or the can slipped, we should probably get our feet wet. There was a spice of uncertainty about it which added to our enjoyment, and so much laughter was heard that Uncle George knocked at the door to tell us he believed we were only playing, and that he should go out to dinner, and take all the "grown-ups" with him.

When seven o'clock came, however, and I peeped round the curtain, I saw rather more than the usual number of people for audience. Instead of going out, Uncle George had fetched some friends to see the performance. I must confess I felt a little nervous, for I had been asked to be showman. I had not time to get very frightened before the gong sounded, and loud applause greeted our first picture.

Cousin Bertram, a dark foreign-looking boy, was dressed as a workman; he was examining a brand-new wooden tub; a few shavings lying about showed that he had made the tub himself.

"Once upon a time," I began, in answer to a whispered, "Now then, Showman, speak up! The water will run over."

"Once upon a time, there was a cooper living at Idria, in Austria. Here he is; he has just finished a tub."

Down went the curtain, and when it rose almost instantly there was no more danger of the stage being swamped. The tub was under the spring, and the water dropped rapidly into it, making one of our smallest cousins exclaim—

"Why, it's real water, mother!"

"The cooper used always to put his tubs and buckets under a spring to swell, and to see if they were water-tight. He did it as usual one evening, and the next morning he went to fetch the new tub."

The next scene was funny enough. Bertram was standing over the tub, grasping it with both hands. His face was red with exertion, and every muscle seemed at work.

"What's the matter?" said Uncle George, laughing heartily. "Have you got another sort of load-stone there that attracts wood?"

"It is so heavy that the cooper cannot lift it. He had never had any difficulty before, but this day, try as he would, he could not move the tub an inch. He felt sure that there must be something besides water in it, so he examined it very carefully, and found something shining like silver at the bottom. He was more puzzled than ever, so he carried some of the silvery liquid to a chemist whom he knew. The chemist guessed in a moment what it was, but as the cooper evidently did not know its value, he paid him only a little money, and told him to bring some more as soon as he could. That is the way in which the quicksilver mine in Idria was discovered."

"Well done, all!" cried the audience, and I was running away to get the paper for the next tableau when they called me back, to know a little more about the mine. Father finished the story for me.

"When the story of the cooper's discovery was found out, several people made a company,

and opened a mine which yielded one hundred tons of quicksilver every year ; but after a time one of the Dukes of Austria bought it from the company. The cooper discovered the mine in 1497. What, another tableau already ? You have been quick ! "

" What a muddle ! " exclaimed someone, and she was right.

The stage represented a most untidy workshop. On the wall was a big card bearing the name Aimé Argand—Geneva, 1755.

"Argand lamps," remarked Uncle George. "I have one in the dining-room."

" We know it," I replied ; " so we thought we would like to show you something about them. That is Aimé Argand reading by a lamp which he made himself. It isn't an Argand, I know, but it is near enough for a make-believe. Aimé Argand thought that it would be a good plan to fit the wick into a hollow cylinder, so that plenty of oxygen could get to the inside as well as the outside of the round flame."

" But there is no chimney ; look how it flickers," said Minnie.

I did not answer, but the curtain fell for a moment, then rose to show Jack walking about the workshop with the neck of a broken oil-flask in his hand.

He was strolling round, covering up first one thing, then the other, with the neck of the bottle. Aimé looked up occasionally from his book, as if he wished he would keep quiet, but he said nothing.

" That fidgety boy is Aimé's younger brother. He is full of mischief, and often tires out Aimé's patience, but he will be of use some day."

As I spoke Jack popped the flask over the lamp wick, up shot the flame, giving a much better light.

" There is the origin of the lamp chimney you see : it was all that was wanted to complete Argand's invention, about 1780."

" Moral," said Uncle George solemnly : " Be patient with the tricks of your younger brothers ; they may be some use, after all. I'm tired of boys ; can't you give the girls a turn ? Why, where's Minnie ? "

She had disappeared before the last tableau, to get ready to take part in the next, so we told Uncle George that he would have his wish next time.

"It will not be a picture, though," said Charlie, taking his seat before the curtain again. " They are going to speak."

It was some little time before the curtain rose. All the muddle had been cleared away, and the cleanest, tidiest little kitchen was arranged in its place.

Father was standing by the table with some handkerchiefs in his hand ; Minnie came in presently, holding up a sprig of parsley.

" Look, father," she said, " isn't this a beautiful leaf ? Do you know, I think it would make a lovely pattern for a print frock."

" Let us try it, Nancy," said father, taking it from her hand. " You are a good child ; you are always looking out for the beauties of this world instead of grumbling at the ugly bits in it. Give me a plate."

A funny sort of plate it was, too : one of the pewter ones which we give to mischievous babies now, but which, many years ago, were the ordinary dinner plates for people who were not rich. On this pewter plate my father scratched a pattern of the pretty parsley leaf, and then he pretended to print it off on one of the handkerchiefs.

" Who knows what that all means ? " said Charlie, when the curtain had fallen.

Nobody could guess, so Master Charlie, who had been reading it all up with father, was delighted to be able to explain it. It seems that father represented the founder of the Peel family, who was a cotton printer. His daughter, Nancy, used often to bring him some new design, and one day she brought the leaf of parsley. It was called the Parsley pattern by outsiders, but the family always spoke of it as Nancy's pattern. It was such a favourite, and sold better than any that had been made before, and helped to make the Peels a rich family. The father of Nancy was always spoken of afterwards as Parsley Peel.

" Well done," said everyone in the audience when we had quite finished ; and having told Uncle George that we should expect an extra good exhibition from him the next evening, we went off to bed.

E. M. Waterworth.

The Prisoner's Mouse.

Some time ago a man was sent to Holloway Gaol in London to serve six months with hard labour for an assault. One night he was annoyed by a mouse, and after trying for an hour and a half he succeeded in catching it. But he did not kill it, giving it instead some of his supper porridge. He gained the confidence of the animal, and carried it in his pocket every morning while he was doing exercise in the courtyard of the prison. By-and-by the mouse became quite tame, and used to sit during breakfast on a brush, and eat out of its master's hand. The prisoner made a collar of many colours for it out of small bits of matting. During the day the tiny creature spent most of its time in cleaning itself with its paws. It knew its owner so well that, when accidentally dropped in the dark cell, it always returned at the sound of his voice. When the man left gaol, he took his pet with him.

Little Indian School Girls.

When the Marchioness of Dufferin was in India she visited many of the schools, generally presiding at the prize-giving. Rather to her surprise she found the Indian girls quick at learning. They seemed to read and write much better and in a shorter time than English bairns, and had a quiet businesslike air that was very noticeable. The gifts that Lady Dufferin had to present were often dolls, and they were all examined with a critical eye. When a little girl got a doll that was not so good-looking as one that her neighbour had got, she sometimes returned to see whether she might not have a better. Unfortunately the dolls selected for this purpose were not pretty dolls, as a rule, being made of china, with pink and white face, black china hair, and long china boots. A school entertainment in India appears to be a somewhat dull affair, but when the children came to Lady Dufferin's garden at Simla and Barrackpore, the girls enjoyed themselves more heartily. They took off their bracelets and anklets, tied them in a handkerchief, and gave them to the care of a trustworthy person, and then ran and romped as merrily as wee English lassies. But someone should see that a better sort of doll is provided for the little Indian prize-winners.

What the Boy said to the Czar.

One day as the Emperor Nicholas, grandfather of the present Czar of Russia, was riding through a village near Moscow, he happened to drop his whip, and beckoned to a peasant lad, who was standing near watching the gay costumes of the procession, and bade him pick it up. The boy came up to him and asked "Who are you?" Though he could not help being struck by the youth's boldness, he said, "I am the Emperor." "Well," retorted the boy, "if you cannot take care of your whip, how can you take care of your subjects?" Nicholas, far from being angry at this remark, seemed rather struck by it, and ordered the lad to be brought up at his expense to any profession he chose. The boy wished to be an artist, and to-day he

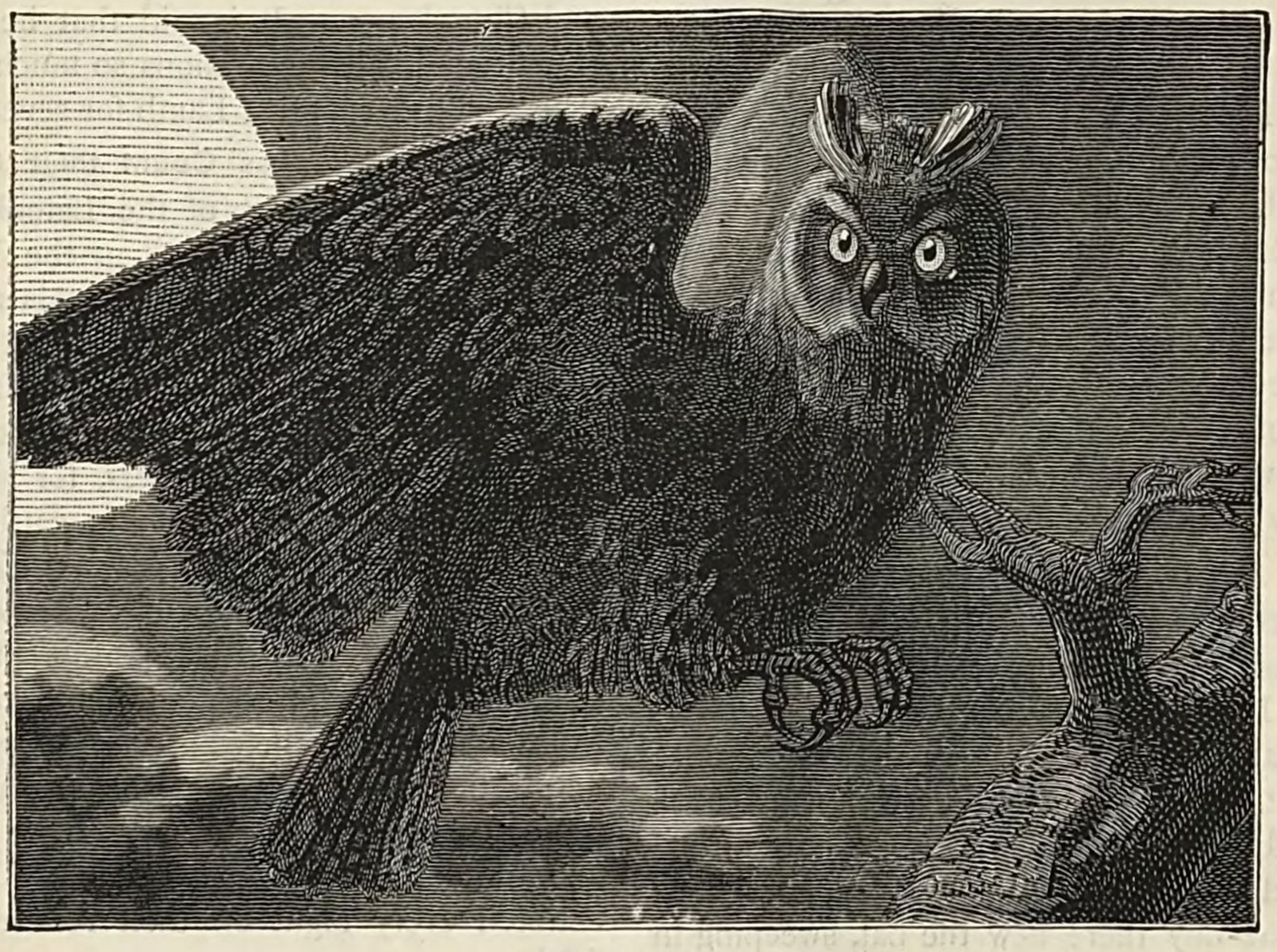
bears a distinguished reputation as a painter. His name is Ivasovsky, and, at the time of the incident above related, his parents were Armenian peasants, living in the very village where it occurred.

The Chinese and Monkeys' Tails.

There is a Macaque monkey found in Formosa that is said to suffer a good deal from the ignorance of the Chinese. The animal's long tail offends the natives. In their eyes it looks like the pigtail they wear on their own heads. They actually believe that the monkeys are making fun of them. So the tail of every macaque that they catch is cut off. This barbarous cruelty is worse than that of the farmer's wife who treated the blind mice so harshly. But then *they* had chased her; and some women, you know, are really afraid of mice.

A Big Owl.

The eared owl—whose portrait is given on this page—is the largest member of the well-known owl family. Though seldom seen in England except in aviaries, it is pretty common on the Continent. It is fond of sitting with its feathers all ruffled up to make it look bigger than it really is, and it fumes and scolds and "spits" a great deal, like the bully it is. Because it feeds on nearly every living thing it can catch, it is attacked in turn by all the other birds whenever they have a chance. This happens in the daytime, for then—like the rest of the owls—it is rather helpless in the strong light. But its enemies do not spare it. The crows take the lead in "mobbing" it, as the custom is called, and even the eagle has been known to join in the fray. Before the owl has found shelter, it will generally have received a very severe mauling.



THE EAGLE OWL.

Young Wybrow's Deed of Valour.

Some time ago a boy named Wood went with two other lads to explore the underground passages beneath Fort Clarence at Chatham. All at once he disappeared, but later on was heard shouting as from a considerable depth in the earth. His friends ran off to tell his father, who discovered, on his arrival, the mouth of a well and a windlass. One of the lads, named Wybrow, offered to go down into the well, saying, "I'm lighter than you, Mr. Wood, and shall not break the old rope." When Wybrow descended he found Wood lying in two feet of water, and in great pain. He lashed the rope round him, and the sufferer was hauled up and

removed to a hospital, where his severe injuries were promptly attended to. Then Wybrow was drawn up to the surface. A subscription was raised in Chatham and Rochester in recognition of the brave boy's valour.

Pets on Ben Nevis.

The staff of the observatory on the top of Ben Nevis are visited from time to time by a great many animals, some of which remain with them as pets. One winter a snow bunting was driven by stress of weather to the house. Food was given to it, and thereafter it came daily to the window for its meal. On another occasion, a "blue," or mountain hare was found by the side of a loch on the Ben. It was taken "home," and soon grew tame. There was only one objection to it. In the evening the creature was most lively, and used to annoy its protectors when they were reading or writing, by getting in the way of the light from the lamp. But that, of course, was a pure accident, and the men gradually got accustomed to it.

But the Bat Meant no Harm.

Richard the Lion-hearted was crowned in Westminster Abbey on the 3rd of September, 1189. During the ceremony the spectators were greatly alarmed by the sudden appearance of a bat. The creature had probably been disturbed out of its slumbers by the unwonted noise and bustle. At all events, in the brightest part of the day there flew the bat, sweeping in the same circular path, and particularly around the king's throne. In the minds of the awe-struck and superstitious onlookers, the whirlings of the innocent animal were considered as of evil omen. What came of the bat history sayeth not.

Chaffing Southey.

Major André was a British officer who was hanged as a spy in the American War of Independence. The circumstances of his death caused a great deal of high feeling. The whole British army went into mourning for him, and a monument to his memory was raised in Westminster Abbey. This monument contained a sculpture representing André's death, and the figure of Washington was also introduced. Sometimes the head of André used to be carried off, sometimes the head of Washington; according to the sympathies of the robber. The theft was generally put down, however, to the credit, or discredit, of the boys of Westminster School. "The mischief was done," wrote Charles Lamb in a letter to Southey, "about the time that you were a scholar there. Do you know anything about the unfortunate relic?" To appreciate the joke, it must be borne in mind that Southey in his youth was a Republican, but later in life became a grave and respectable Tory and Churchman. It is said that he took this allusion to his early opinions so much to heart, that he did not forgive Lamb for several years.

How the Latookas Count their Cattle.

Cattle are the wealth of the Latookas, a race of handsome savages living in the West Nile country. Every night the animals are driven into the kraal, where fires are lighted to protect them, by means of the smoke, from flies. Sentinels, seated on a high platform, keep watch day and night against robbers, for since there are as many as 10,000 or 12,000 cattle in every town, they offer a temptation to attack. Above the entrance to each kraal, but low enough to enable the creatures to strike it, is hung a bell made out of a palm-nut, which the cattle must brush against with their horns and backs as they enter the pen. Each tinkle of the bell announces the passage of an ox into the enclosure, and by this ingenious appliance the cattle are counted every night on their return from the fields.

Buried in the Coal Cellar.

A black kitten having disappeared suddenly, and search for her having proved of no avail, the family to which she belonged came to the conclusion that she had either been stolen, or had strayed beyond bounds and could not retrace her steps home. A fortnight afterwards, however, one of the children heard mewing in the area and raised an alarm. The coal cellar was searched without delay, and in due time the poor kitten was discovered, saved from a cruel death by the fact that a large lump of coal had fallen in such a way as to form a roof that protected her from being crushed, at the same time that it effectually cut off all hope of escape. On the day she was lost two tons of coals had been shot into the cellar, and probably the strange noise had aroused her curiosity, with the

result mentioned above. It was found that although she had been struck with smaller bits of coal, no bones were broken. In spite of her fifteen days' imprisonment, she was able to walk, and partook with eager relish of a saucerful of warm milk.

Printers' Punctuation Marks.

Dr. Brewer says that the mark of interrogation (?) stands for $\frac{q}{o}$, that is, the first and last letters of the Latin word *quæstio*, which means *question.* So, too, the sign of interjection (!) $\frac{I}{o}$ is the Latin word *Io*, an exclamation of joy. Then the mark § is merely the first letter of the Greek word *paragraph.* The Greek grammarians used a star (*) to call attention to something striking or important, and they employed a dagger (†) to indicate something objectionable, which should be cut out, as it were, with a dagger.

Caught Napping.

The kingfisher, as everyone knows, is a shy bird, and seldom ventures near the haunts of men. Indeed, the mere sight of a man in the distance will often cause it to fly right away. Now and then, however, it is not quite so watchful. It is recorded that one fine frosty morning a young man was passing at the back of an old mill near the village of Meifod in Montgomeryshire, when he saw a kingfisher sitting on a rail behind the water-wheel. Thinking the bird was dozing, he crept quietly up to it and seized it, the noise of the wheel probably preventing his footsteps from being heard. This man, however, seemed to have no love for birds in general, nor for the beauty of the kingfisher in particular, for he wrung the poor thing's neck.

In Search of the "Fountain of Youth."

When the New World was discovered, the wildest stories were spread throughout Spain and England about its wealth and its other great glories. Amongst other silly tales there was one to the effect that a "Fountain of Youth" existed somewhere in this wonderful country of America. Now there was an ancient Spanish warrior named Ponce de Leon, who thought that if he could but find this marvellous fountain and bathe in its waters he would remain for ever young. He was old enough to know better, for in his early life he had fought bravely against the Moors, then he had gone with Columbus on his second voyage, and for a time had been Governor of Porto Rico. However, he was so bent on growing young again, and becoming rich into the bargain, that in 1512 he sailed westward from Porto Rico in search of the fountain. On Easter Sunday he sighted land, and named it Florida, because the Spaniards called the day Pascua Florida—that is, Flowery Easter. But Ponce de Leon found no fountain. Instead, on his second visit—five years later—he met with his death from an Indian arrow. The province that he discovered fell to Spain, and near the spot where he first landed was built—fifty years afterwards—the town of St. Augustine, the oldest in the United States.

Queen Victoria and the Beggar Man.

One of the well-known figures of Windsor is, or was, a blind man who used to walk the streets of the royal borough playing sacred music on an accordion. While the Queen was driving one day the poor man caught her eye, and her Majesty at once caused the carriage to be stopped, and gave him some money. The recipient of the Sovereign Lady's charity, however, had a keen sense of business, for it is said that he afterwards appeared with a board on his breast, bearing these words: "Blind from Inflammation. Assisted by Her Majesty the Queen."

Why he Disliked Ostriches.

A naturalist once had a baboon that was trained to act as a sort of watch-dog in his house in Egypt. The monkey was very fond of dozing in the sun beneath some straw on the top of the wall. Among the animals in the establishment were a few ostriches. This bird, as you are aware, is a most inquisitive creature. Now, as fate would have it, an ostrich came along one day as the baboon was sleeping, and espied its tail hanging down the wall. Taking it for a bell-pull, it gave it a good tug with its strong beak. At this outrage the monkey awoke as angry as it could be, and, in the twinkling of an eye, slipped from beneath its counterpane of straw, seized the intruder by the neck, and gave it a sound thrashing. Nor ever afterwards could that baboon be made to look with the slightest favour upon ostriches.

PAGES FOR VERY LITTLE FOLK.

TOO CLEVER.

A LITTLE bird, just newly hatched,
Was sure that he could fly;
His father warned him he would fall,
But still that bird would try.

He started off; but very soon
Came tumbling to the ground
And broke his leg; now with a crutch
He limps and hobbles round.

KA-TIE'S KIT-TEN.

"Knit-ting, knit-ting, knit-ting,
With my kit-ten sit-ting
On my shoul-der. Are not we
Hap-py as we both can be?"

SO thought Ka-tie as she stood at the cot-tage door knit-ting a pair of stock-ings for her fath-er. And as she knit-ted them she thought of the night when her fath-er had found a ti-ny kit-ten half dead in the road, and had brought it home.

"And it shall be your own kit-ten if it lives; and you will take care of it."

"Oh, I will do ev-er-y-thing for it, fath-er," said Ka-tie.

And then she fetch-ed some milk in a sau-cer, and put a lit-tle warm wa-ter to it, and lift-ed the kit-ten on her lap, dip-ped her fin-ger in the milk, and held it to the kit-ten's mouth. And to her great de-light the kit-ten put out its tongue and lick-ed her fin-ger.

"I think she will live," said Ka-tie's fath-er.

Then the kit-ten o-pen-ed its eyes—such pret-ty eyes! and Ka-tie gave it some more milk.

It was some days be-fore the kit-ten be-gan to lap the milk her-self, but when once she be-gan she soon be-came strong and health-y, and learn-ed to know Ka-tie, and to look up-on her as her mis-tress.

There nev-er was a kit-ten so full of fun; she was frisk-ing a-bout ev-er-y-where, run-ning round aft-er her tail, and pull-ing pa-per to pie-ces, and try-ing to catch a ball that Ka-tie had tied to a piece of string.

She was a ver-y frisk-y kit-ten, and ran up and down stairs, and in-to the gar-den aft-er Ka-tie, and nev-er seem-ed hap-py un-less she was with her young mis-tress.

"She knows I love her," said Ka-tie, "and that I feed her and take care of her."

"Yes," said her fath-er; "Kit-ty knows you are kind to her; an-i-mals soon know whom they may trust."

PLAYMATES. (*See p.* 282.)

"See how fond she is of sit-ting on my shoul-der," said Ka-tie; "and she jumps up quite eas-i-ly, and nev-er sticks her claws in-to me. Do you like me, Kit-ty?"

And she turn-ed her face to the kit-ten.

Kit-ty rub-bed her head a-gainst Ka-tie's cheek, as much as to say, "Yes, I do"; and she purr-ed soft-ly.

"She is say-ing 'Yes, yes,'" said Ka-tie, "and is kiss-ing me in the best way that cats can."

And then Ka-tie said again—

"Knit-ting, knit-ting, knit-ting,
With my kit-ten sit-ting
On my shoul-der. Are not we
Hap-py as we both can be?
And to-geth-er oft we play
In the pleas-ant au-tumn day."

J. G.

THE BOY WHO WOULD NOT GO TO SCHOOL.

LIT-TLE El-len was rea-dy for school. She was tak-ing a last peep at one of her les-son-books be-fore pla-cing it in her school-bag, and had put on a hat.

"Now I am quite rea-dy," she said.

Then Rose, her eld-er sis-ter, turn-ed to Ar-thur, who was look-ing rath-er cross.

"Here is your book, Ar-thur," she said. "Make haste and get your cap, so that you and El-len may start for school."

EL-LEN.

"I don't want to go to school," said Ar-thur. "I won't go to school."

"Oh, that is ver-y naugh-ty; you know that you must go to school."

But Ar-thur on-ly said—

"I won't go! I won't go!"

"Oh, Ar-thur!" said Rose, "you must not say that. Here is your cap; put it on, and go with El-len."

But Ar-thur cri-ed and scream-ed, and when Rose came near him he kick-ed at her.

So Rose rang the bell, and when nurse came she ask-ed her what she had bet-ter do a-bout Ar-thur.

"Mas-ter Ar-thur," said nurse, "if you will not go to school, I shall shut you up in your bed-room and give you no-thing but bread and wa-ter for din-ner."

"Oh, Ar-thur," said Rose, "you will be a good boy and go to school. Think how sor-ry mam-ma will be when she comes home to find that you have been naugh-ty."

"I won't go," said Ar-thur.

Then nurse took Ar-thur by the hand, though he kick-ed and scream-ed, and put him into the bed-room and shut the door.

Then nurse sat down with her work in the next room.

In a few min-utes Ar-thur be-gan to bat-ter a-gainst the door. "Let me out! Let me out!"

But nurse took no no-tice, and let Ar-thur shout as much as he lik-ed.

At last he got tir-ed, and sat down and cri-ed more qui-et-ly, and then fell on the floor and went to sleep.

When nurse found that all was still, she o-pen-ed the door, and see-ing Ar-thur was fast a-sleep, laid him on the bed. There he slept till near-ly din-ner time, when sud-den-ly he woke up, feel-ing ver-y hun-gry.

He could not re-mem-ber for a mo-ment how it was that he was there.

Then he got up and o-pen-ed the door.

"I want din-ner," he said to nurse.

"'I WON'T GO TO SCHOOL'" (*p.* 282).

So nurse fetch-ed a slice of bread and a glass of wa-ter, which when Ar-thur saw he be-gan at once to cry, and said he want-ed to go down-stairs to have his din-ner.

"No, Mas-ter Ar-thur," said nurse; "you are not go-ing down-stairs a-gain to-day; you have been so naugh-ty."

Ar-thur push-ed a-way the bread and would not eat it, and sat down on a stool and be-gan to think that this was worse than go-ing to school.

He thought the day would nev-er be o-ver. He heard El-len come home from school, and then he heard her go-ing in-to the gar-den with Rose.

Then he said to nurse—

"Nurse, I am sor-ry I did not go to school. I shall nev-er want to stay at home a-gain."

"I hope not," said nurse. "I hope an-oth-er time you will be a wis-er and a bet-ter boy."

J. G.

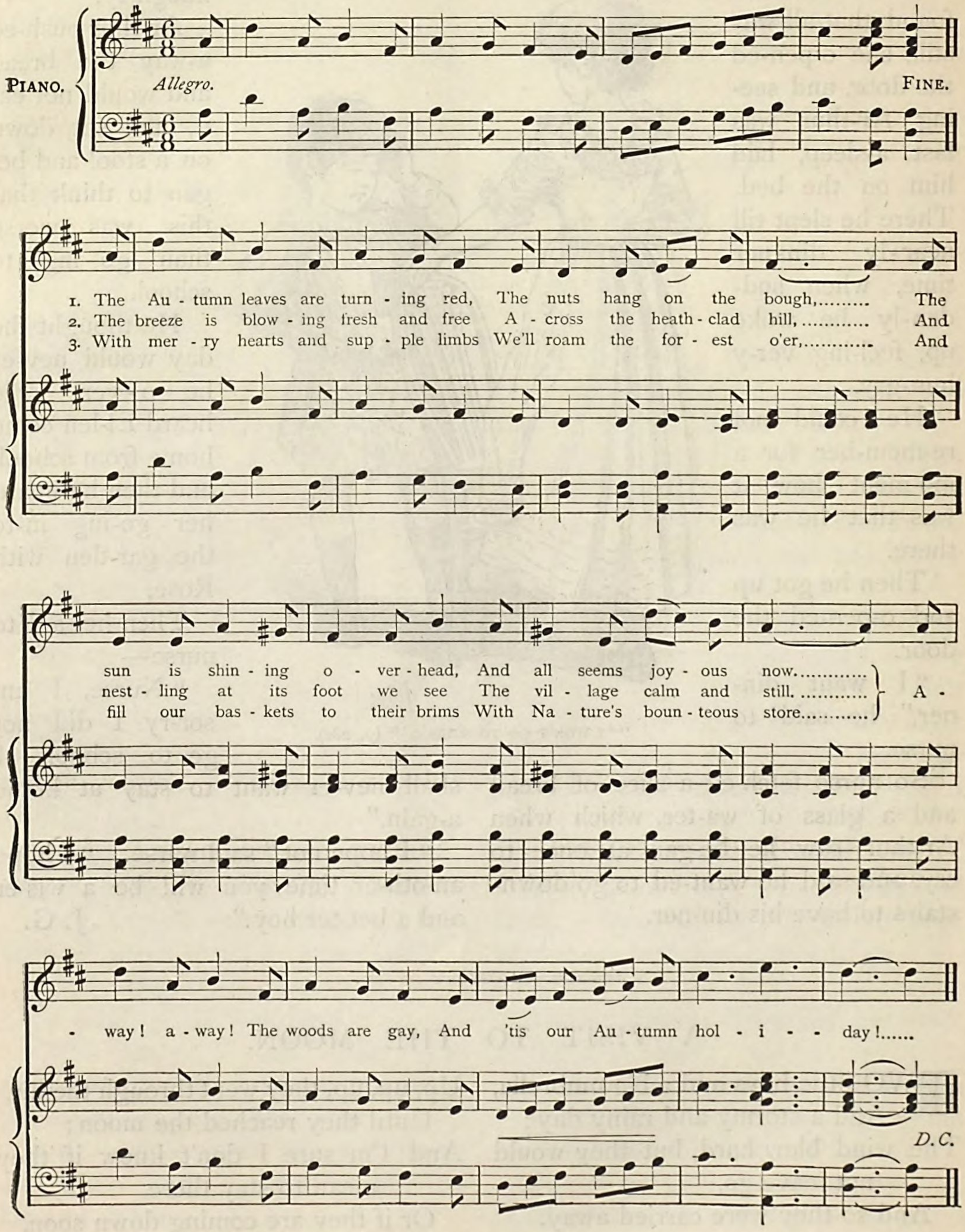
A VISIT TO THE MOON.

TWO little boys and a big umbrella,
And a stormy and rainy day:
The wind blew hard, but they would not leave go,
And so they were carried away.

Up, up, up, they went through the air,
Until they reached the moon;
And I'm sure I don't know if they mean to stay there,
Or if they are coming down soon.

An Autumn Holiday.

Words and Music by B. Mansell Ramsey.



OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES.

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

MY first in diamond will be found,
My second is in underground,
My third is found in silk brocade,
Seek for my fourth in lemonade,
My fifth you'll find in every isle,
My sixth is in the river Nile ;
Now read me through and read me down,
You'll find the name of an Irish town.

Southbourne, Birchfield Road, Birmingham.

A. CONNIE SMEDLEY.
(Aged 14½.)

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

MY 8, 9, 4, 10 falls from the clouds.
My 5, 2, 13, 5 is a shelter.
My 3, 6, 11 is a river in Scotland.
My 3, 2, 12, 10 is a Church dignitary.
My 12, 4, 7, 11 is a river in Yorkshire.
My 8, 4, 1 is an edge.
My whole is a European sea.

Corn Hill House, Sherborne, Dorset.

DAISY CAMPBELL.
(Aged 12½.)

METAGRAM.

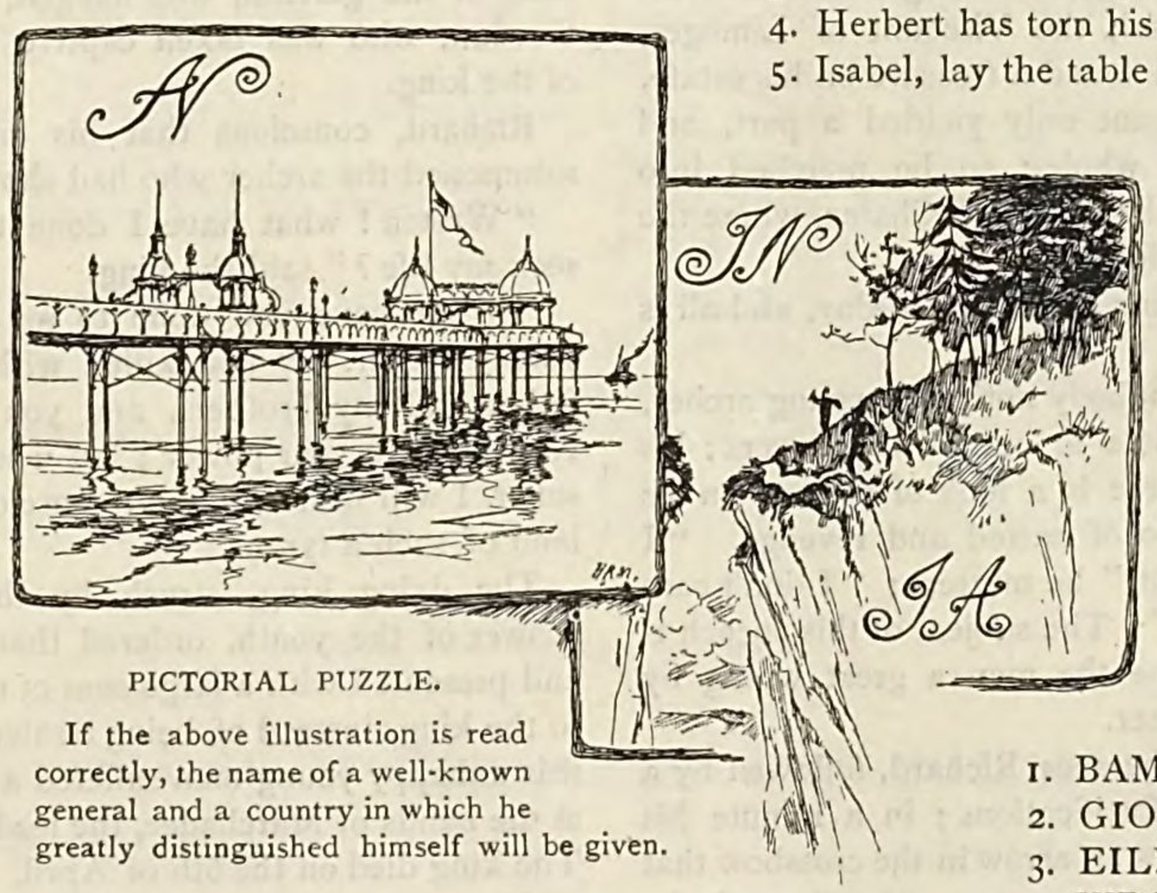
I AM to pour in. Change my head, and I am an account. Again, and I am to deprive of life. Again, and I am a testament. Again, and I am a natural elevation of land. Again, and I am a medicine. Again, and I am a stream. Again, and I am a money-box. Again, and I am a measure of capacity.

LOUISA BAIN.
(Aged 11.)
186, *Croydon Road, Anerley.*

BURIED NAMES OF GIRLS.

1. JANE has given me a myrtle.
2. Give mamma your pencil, Mary.
3. Ethel lent me her paint-box.
4. Herbert has torn his coat.
5. Isabel, lay the table for tea at once.

VERA H. HUNTLY.
(Aged 10¼.)
14, *Durham Terrace, Westbourne Park, London, W.*



PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

If the above illustration is read correctly, the name of a well-known general and a country in which he greatly distinguished himself will be given.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

IF the following letters are transposed the initials will form a well-known city.

1. BAML, an animal.
2. GIONPEN, a beginning.
3. EILN, a river in Egypt.
4. WDSON, a roadstead.
5. NOGREA, a fruit.
6. SSSINURAC, a flower.

MARGARET SACKVILLE.
60, *Grosvenor Street, London, W.* (Aged 9.)

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

WHEN the missing letters have been supplied, the whole will form a verse from one of Thomas Hood's poems.

"A×i×t×e×a×r×c×m×s×t×i×h×,
H×r×y×s×r×b×u×, h×r×a×r×s×r×w×,
W×t×s×l×e×s×o×s×p×n×e×w×n×s,
A×d×r×m×h×m×o×s×e×l×t×e×s×o×n."

Redcourt, Shakespeare Road, Bedford.

NORMAN THARP.
(Aged 11¼.)

HIDDEN PROVERB.

I WANT a ball.
Mind you don't miss your train.
Charlie is a naughty boy.
You must not talk, as I am writing.
Good children have their reward.
You may go out, as the weather is fine now.
I wish I had a pony.
Is it a mile to town?

CECILIA R. CAPEL.
St. John's Mount, Hereford. (Aged 11¾.)

ARITHMOREM.

IF Roman numerals are substituted for the following figures, and the letters transposed, the initials when properly arranged will give the name of a well-known poet.

50 and T W R A E, a boy's name.
5 and N E A R, a bird.
100 and E O N U, a weight.
1,000 and A P U, an animal.
110 and A O, to persuade.
50 and E E, a fish.

IRENE WEAR.
Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne. (Aged 14¼.)

OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PAGES.

ANSWER TO "PICTURE HISTORY WANTING WORDS" (*p.* 144).

FIRST PRIZE ANSWER.

THE sun shone brightly on the Castle of Chaluz, on the 26th of March, 1199; it glittered on the armour of the soldiers who were surrounding the castle, and on that of the men on its walls.

But why is the castle in such a stir on this bright morning, and why is it surrounded with armed men?

This is the reason—Richard I. of England having heard that his vassal, the Viscount of Limoges, had found a treasure on his estate, sent to claim it; the count only yielded a part, and Richard wished for the whole; so he marched into France and laid siege to the Castle of Chaluz, where the treasure was said to be hidden.

The garrison are expecting an assault to-day, and all is bustle and preparation.

They are so busy that nobody notices a young archer, who is sitting at a loophole in one of the towers; his name is Bertrand, and there is a look of sadness on his face, but there is one too of hatred and revenge. "I wish I could kill the tyrant," he mutters; "I don't care what they do to me for it." The subject of this speech is Richard I., who has done the man a great wrong by killing his father and brother.

As Bertrand gazes out he sees Richard, followed by a few men, examining the fortifications; in a minute his mind is made up: he places an arrow in the crossbow that lies by his side, and shoots; the arrow flies through the air and pierces the king's shoulder.

He is carried to his tent, and the arrow extracted; but, alas! it is done by an unskilful doctor, and the wound, which was not at first fatal, festers, and in a few days Richard of the Lion Heart is no longer king of England.

Before his death the castle is taken, and the garrison all slaughtered except Bertrand, who is brought before the king, who graciously pardons him; but when their king has expired, the soldiers put him to a cruel death.

GWENDOLEN M. SAYE.
Heathfield, (Aged 14.)
Ringwood, Hants.

Certified by S. L. HARRIS (Governess).

SECOND PRIZE ANSWER.

THE picture represents a familiar scene in the annals of English history, viz., the siege of Chaluz, where Richard of the Lion Heart received his death wound.

Richard's vassal Vidomar, Viscount of Limoges, had discovered treasure on his estate in France. He sent the king a large share of it, but Richard, as his superior, claimed the whole.

Of course Vidomar would not calmly yield the treasure. So Richard besieged his Castle of Chaluz. While besieging the castle Richard was wounded in the shoulder by an arrow shot by an archer named Bertrand de Gurdun.

The barbed head of the arrow was removed by an unskilful surgeon, who performed the task in such a clumsy manner that mortification set in. The wound was now made fatal, but it would not have been if the arrow had been removed carefully.

The castle had surrendered to Richard's men. Every man of the garrison was hanged, with the exception of Gurdun, who was taken captive to await the pleasure of the king.

Richard, conscious that his end was drawing near, summoned the archer who had shot the fatal arrow.

"Wretch! what have I done to you that you should seek my life?" said the king.

"What have you done to me?" coolly replied the young archer. "You killed with your own hands my father and my brothers, and you intended to kill me. Now I am in your power; but whatever you cause me to suffer, I will bear willingly, conscious that I have rid the land of such a tyrant."

The dying king, struck by the brave and fearless answer of the youth, ordered that he should be set free and presented with a large sum of money; but, unknown to the king, instead of being treated as Richard directed, this unhappy young man suffered a most barbarous death at the hands of Marchadee, the leader of the Brabantines. The king died on the 6th of April, 1199, in the 42nd year of his age, and the 10th of his reign.

RACHEL D. DEAS.
Kafr Dawar, Northern Grove, (Aged 13.)
Didsbury, near Manchester.

Certified by A. P. D. DEAS (Mother).

THIRD PRIZE ANSWER.

THE picture describes the death of Richard I. Arriving from Normandy, Richard heard that a considerable treasure had been found on the lands of Vidomar, Viscount of Limoges, his vassal.

This the king, as superior lord, claimed; and as the viscount only offered half of it, and refused the rest, Richard, determined to have the whole, besieged him in his castle at Chaluz, where the treasure was supposed to be lodged.

The want of provisions reduced the garrison to the greatest straits, and they offered to surrender the castle and all that was in it to the king, if their lives were spared. This the king refused, telling them that he

would take the place by storm, and hang every one of them.

The garrison of the castle were driven to despair. The king, with Marchadee, the leader of his Brabantine soldiers, then surveyed the walls to see where the assault should be made, when a youth named Bertrand de Gurdun, recognising the king from the ramparts, discharged an arrow, which hit him in his left shoulder.

Soon after, the castle was taken, and all the men in it were hanged except Bertrand.

The king's wound was not in itself dangerous, but it was made so by the unskilfulness of the physician in extracting the arrow-head from the shoulder.

Feeling his end approaching, Richard sent for Bertrand de Gurdun.

"Wretch!" he exclaimed, "what have I done unto thee that thou shouldst seek my life?"

Bertrand replied, "My father and my brothers hast thou slain, and myself thou wouldst hang; let me die now, in cruel torture if thou wilt. I am content if thou diest, and the world be freed of an oppressor!"

"Youth, I forgive thee!" cried Richard; "loose him, and let him go."

But Marchadee would not, and after the king's death Bertrand was killed.

Richard died in anguish on the 6th of April, 1199. His body was buried at Fontevraud.

EDITH GAMMON.
(Aged $9\frac{3}{4}$.)

137, *Grosvenor Park, Camberwell, London, S.E.*

Certified by HARRIET GAMMON (Mother).

LIST OF HONOUR.

First Prize (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal of the "Little Folks" Legion of Honour*:—GWENDOLEN M. SAYE (14), Heathfield, Ringwood, Hampshire. *Second Prize* (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal*:—RACHEL D. DEAS (13), Kafr Dawar, Northern Grove, Didsbury, near Manchester. *Third Prize* (*Half-Guinea Book*), *with Officer's Medal*:—EDITH GAMMON ($9\frac{3}{4}$), 137, Grosvenor Park, Camberwell, London, S.E. *Honourable Mention, with Members' Medals*:—ALFRED P. SANDEMAN ($13\frac{1}{2}$), Maycroft, Ardmore, Youghal, Co. Waterford; ANNIE OATRIDGE (16), 27, Carfax Street, New Swindon, Wiltshire; MAY E. METCALFE (11), 37, St. John's Villas, Upper Holloway, London, N.; ESMÉ GRAVES ($8\frac{3}{4}$), Stone Castle, Greenhithe, Kent; Robert A. RAPPOPORT ($13\frac{1}{2}$), Villa Pozzoforte, Bordighera, Italy; ETHEL WELDON (16), Erlimount, Earley, Reading; RUTH A. AITKEN (11), Inglefield, Totland Bay, Isle of Wight; HAROLD MILES (9), 1, Park Villas, Ash, near Aldershot; MABEL CHARLES (12), 6, Ambrose Terrace, Hoe Street North, Walthamstow, Essex; EMMA JACKSON (16), c/o Rev. J. Renny, D.D., Potway House, Plashet Road, Upton Manor, E.; AGNES COCHRANE ($13\frac{1}{2}$), Aldin Grange, near Durham; CLARA HIRST (14), 7, Fern Avenue, Newcastle-on-Tyne; MILLIE SCOBIE (11), 21, Manor Gardens, Holloway, London, N.; AGNES JANSSENS (14), Rue des Moutons, 36, Louvain, Belgium; ELSIE GRAY (13), 36, Beamsley Road, Frizinghall, Bradford; HELEN E. M. WYLDE ($8\frac{1}{2}$), 11, King Edward Road, Rochester; LUCIEN C. GOLLA (12), 45, Rione Amedeo, Naples; JOHN B. WATERLOW ($11\frac{1}{2}$), Châlet Evers, Biarritz, France.

ANSWERS TO OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES (*p.* 213).

HIDDEN PROVERB.

"A bad workman quarrels with his tools."

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

SEPTEMBER.

S. M **E** n. Pa **P** er. Fea **T** her. Sept **E** mber.
Dia **M** ond. So **B** er. P **E** n. **R.**

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

SALISBURY—GLADSTONE.

1. **S** ta **G**. 2. **A** runde **L**. 3. **L** obeli **A**. 4. **I** nvali **D**.
5. **S** tres **S**. 6. **B** oo **T**. 7. **U** nd **O**. 8. **R** aisi **N**. 9. **Y** ar **E**.

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
'This is my own, my native land!'
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand?"

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

ARBUTUS.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

WATERLOO.

1. **W** orcester. 2. **A** boukir. 3. **T** alavera. 4. **E** vesham. 5. **R** ossbach. 6. **L** ondonderry. 7. **O** utram. 8. **O** udenarde.

GEOGRAPHICAL LETTER.

MY DEAR NANCY,—I have been for a walk with my aunt Charlotte this afternoon. It was my cousin Ellen's birthday last Monday. I gave her a Shetland shawl, also an amber necklace. Farewell dear.

From your affectionate friend,
CLARE JACKSON.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

FURNACE—FRANCE—CRANE—RACE—CAR.

SECOND THOUGHTS ARE BEST!

UPON the road to school one day
They loitered, hand in hand,
And watched the fishing boats that lay
Drawn up along the strand.

"I never could like sums," cried Joe,
"However I might try!"
"We'll have to keep a few," said he,
Or what about our food?
One must look after that, you see,
In going away for good."

"But when I come to think of it
Dear Joe—perhaps we may

"'I THINK IT WOULD BE NICE—DON'T YOU?
TO GO AWAY TO SEA.'"

"And patch-work pricks my fingers so!"
Said Polly, with a sigh.

Get tired, the least, least *wee-est* bit,
Of fish, for every day."

"I think it would be nice—don't you?—
To go away to sea,
And catch the fish, like big folk do?"—
"Yes, let us!" answered he.

He whistled low; and then his brow
Grew serious as could be.
"I really can't remember, now,
What else we'd get at sea.

"And then we'll be so kind, you know,"
Was Polly's happy thought;
"For we shall always let them go
As soon as they are caught."

And, oh! the wind begins to blow—
The skies are grey as lead;
So, Polly dear—suppose we go
Some other day instead?"

A FIGHT FOR LIFE.

"ICE-BOUND IN THE ARCTIC SEAS" (p. 292)

ICE-BOUND IN THE ARCTIC SEAS.

"WE are in for it, Mr. Pulley," the captain of the *Dolphin* said to his mate, as the two stood together on the deck.

"I'm afraid we are, sir; those gales have driven us a good many miles out of our course, and no mistake!" the mate answered him.

As far as the eye could see the vessel was surrounded by huge masses of ice, tumbled or tossed about, or piled up in beautiful pinnacles glistening like crystals. The unfortunate *Dolphin* was ice-bound, and very strangely desolate she appeared as she lay there, her rigging and spars coated with snow, and the great white "field" stretching out on all sides.

The captain walked the frosty deck with an unusually anxious expression, as he had his wife, his son Rob, and little daughter Hetty aboard, and the look-out for them was not pleasant. A series of terrible gales had for days driven the ship helplessly before them, then had followed thick foggy weather, and when that lifted Captain Bluff found himself surrounded by ice-floes, which gathered more rapidly as the days advanced, though he knew the wind must blow from a different quarter soon and disperse them. Still, in the meantime he had nothing to do but wait, and endure the discomfort as best he might.

"I say, dad," a gleeful voice exclaimed at his elbow, "is it true what the men say, that we shall perhaps be fast here for several days?"

"Is it quite true, daddy?" another voice exclaimed. The skipper's face brightened as he turned towards the last speaker, a little blue-eyed girl, and lifted her up in his strong arms.

"Yes, Rob," he replied to the sturdy, rosy-cheeked boy in front of him, "it's quite true. So you must look after my little mermaid here, and try to keep out of mischief, and take care of her at the same time."

"Oh, I'll do that, father. Eskimo Jack says he will teach me how to drive his team of dogs in the sledge upon the ice; and I'll take Sis with me," Rob said excitedly. "Come on, Hetty."

"No, no, Rob," Captain Bluff answered; "you must not take her with you yet, till I see you can manage the sledge properly; and mind you do not go far from the ship's side, either."

"All right, father. Come along, Sis, and see me start off with Jack"; and away scampered the headstrong youth, with the flaxen-haired sister at his heels, happy because it was Rob she followed, for, after her father, Hetty thought Rob the greatest hero that ever lived.

Apart from his wilfulness, Rob certainly was a nice boy, and a general favourite with all—from the mate, who had taught him how to handle a gun, down to Eskimo Jack the Greenlander, who in broken English had promised to show him the way to drive a team of dogs over the snow in first-rate style.

Day after day passed, and the *Dolphin* still lay helpless, the crew kept busy in clearing the snow from her decks, for it fell in heavy showers at times. The cold too was intense, for the sun's light had little power, though it rose each day, looking like a great ball of fire in the sky, and surrounded by a brilliant halo, that at once set the children questioning.

"Is it the same sun we have at home, daddy?" Hetty asked; "that has no ring round it."

And when her father tried to explain how it was the cold made the sun look as if it had a halo, Hetty would open her blue eyes and wonder more than ever.

Rob seemed bent on getting plenty of enjoyment out of his short taste of Arctic life.

Sometimes he would accompany the crew, headed by the captain or Mr. Pulley, when they went out with guns to shoot wild birds to supply the table on board the *Dolphin*, and in a very short time besides, under the Greenlander's guidance, he learnt to manage the dog team in a very creditable manner, so that he and Hetty had fine fun together, being careful not to go far from the ship, as it was feared a stray wolf might wander into the neighbourhood.

Rob, in spite of his headstrong wilfulness, was

very tender and careful with Hetty, whom he loved with all his boyish heart.

"Ay, but they make a bonnie pair!" the sailors would say as they paused in their work to watch the children.

You will easily understand, then, the consternation there was throughout the ship when, during the afternoon of the eighth day of the *Dolphin's* arrival, it was discovered that Rob and Hetty were nowhere to be found, having started out together in the sledge, and after an absence of nearly two hours had not returned.

Poor Mrs. Bluff was half distracted with fear, but the captain, just then returning from a shooting expedition, decided that everyone who could be spared from the *Dolphin* should go in search of them; and telling his wife not to be alarmed, for they could have come to no harm, he shouldered his gun and started off to lead the party, feeling angry with Rob, whose thoughtlessness so often caused trouble to others.

Now, the fact was Rob had persuaded Hetty to go with him in the sledge to see some wonderful ice-caves he had discovered in one of his rambles.

"Are they far, Rob dear," she asked timidly.

"No, Sis. I can soon take you there with the dogs, and they are so beautiful, like the fairy palaces you read about. And there are lots of wild birds flying about, so you shall see me shoot one if you like," added Rob persuasively.

"Let's wait and go with father," Hetty suggested, rather alarmed at the startling programme.

But Rob said "No." He wanted her to go at once, and in his usual headstrong fashion carried the day. Hetty crept under the warm rug beside him, and with a "La la there! whoo whoop!" and a crack of the whip, the dogs were off, bounding away, with the light sledge skimming merrily over the hard ice behind them.

It seemed a long way to Hetty, much farther from the ship than she had ever been before. Indeed, the *Dolphin* was lost to view when she turned to look, though her brother assured her it was only the lumps of ice that hid it from sight. Besides, here were the caves.

"Come and see how beautifully they glisten," he said, as he scrambled out, and led her beneath a low archway in the side of a great cliff of ice.

It really was just as Rob had described it—like a fairy palace. The ice hung down in great thick columns, and the light of day shining dimly through made everything look a most beautiful blue in colour. They wandered about admiring the cave till Rob's appetite warned him it was time to think of getting back.

So they returned to the sledge and made ready to drive away. Just as the boy was about to take his place beside his sister the dogs began barking and whining in a strange manner, and turning himself about to see what caused them to behave so, Rob's eye caught a glimpse of the shaggy form of a gigantic bear standing watching the party intently.

In an instant the lad took in the danger of the position, and fearing lest Hetty also might catch sight of the monster, he turned the dogs swiftly round, and stepping in, seized the whip and urged them forward. As he did so, Bruin, with a low growl, gave a clumsy bound, and at a smart trot set off following.

"What is that funny shuffling sound behind us, Rob?" Hetty asked—a question her brother pretended not to hear, though he had his hand on the gun by his side.

Another moment and the bear was alongside, and the dogs, by instinct feeling their danger, came suddenly to a standstill, and faced about to meet their enemy and fight for dear life. Then it was that poor Hetty realised their danger, as with wild barks the dogs flew upon the great beast, who lifted the leader of the team in his shaggy white paws, and hugged the life out of it as easily as if it had been a rabbit.

"Oh, save poor Disko!" cried Hetty.

Rob knew their own lives were at stake besides, and though his heart beat wildly, his hand was steady, as he raised his gun, took aim, and fired.

It was a fortunate shot; the bullet entered the bear just below the ear, and when the smoke lifted there lay Bruin upon the ice, with the dead Disko still clutched tightly to his shaggy breast.

Just then a shout was heard, and hurrying towards the children came Captain Bluff and his crew. They had heard the report of Rob's

gun, and it had guided them to the spot, where they arrived just in time to witness the white bear's last struggles as he lay dying.

The joy with which the children were welcomed back to the ship may be imagined better than described, and though his father lectured Rob severely for so thoughtlessly running himself and Hetty into so terrible a danger, he added that he was proud to see the way he had behaved in such trying circumstances.

The *Dolphin* floated safely out of the ice-pack a few days later, the bear's skin being carried away in her as a trophy. Rob never looked at it afterwards without remembering how his recklessness had nearly cost his own life and that of the dearest little sister in the world.

FAIR PICTURES.

DOWN in the depths of a cosy chair,
What is he studying closely there?
A large new volume with binding gay—
The prize he has won at school to-day.

Look at the pictures—oh, how fine!—
Palaces, castles on the Rhine;
Gardens and bridges, rivers wide;
Boats—and I know not what beside.

Good little man—some day, maybe,
All of these wonders he will see;
And know them then, though afar he roam,
For the same in the dear old book at home!

FOUR ON AN ISLAND.

By L. T. MEADE, *Author of "A World of Girls," "Polly: a New-Fashioned Girl," &c. &c.*

CHAPTER IX.—A TERRIBLE NIGHT.

THE old ship was certainly worth finding; it must have remained in its present position for years. How it had got there none could say, for not a soul who once lived on board was there to tell the tale. Ferdinand thought that the inmates of the stranded vessel had got off in boats, and so made their escape. The cordage, the sails, the upper part of the ship had all disappeared, but the hull was in fairly good condition, and some of the decks were still whole.

The vessel, which must have been swept into the bay in some furious and long past gale, was now wedged firmly between two rocks. No human power could move it, and it would take a very terrible storm and a higher tide than usual to loosen it from the moorings which it had made for itself.

Tony and Rachel, who were still excited about the name of their island, decided that one of their first tasks would be to paint the *White Ship* on the side of the old vessel. The bay in which it was found was called White Bay, and that very afternoon the children moved all their belongings there, and made up their minds to take up their final abode in the ship until the happy day of their rescue.

It was a most exciting moment for Isabel when she first entered the state-cabin. Here she found plain deal benches, a carpetless floor, and furniture of a class which was used in common trading vessels some twenty or twenty-five years ago. The bunks, or beds, in the inside cabins did not look very inviting, and

for that night—indeed, for several to come—the children slept on deck. Provisions on the old ship there were none. What had survived the wreck had simply been devoured by spiders, mice, and even by the detestable land-crabs.

There were, however, a goodly array of other most useful articles: saucepans, gridirons, frying-pans, two or three kettles, a cask full of paraffin, some lamps, and, what was still more valuable in the existing circumstances, a fair supply of perfectly good powder and shot and some fire-arms.

"Behold!" said Ferdinand, tossing his hat in the air, and putting on a grand tone. "With these I shall become king of the island, for all living creatures, down to the land-crabs, shall fear me; and with these"—pointing to the pots and pans—"Bell shall reign as queen; for, after all, what can a girl do better than know how to cook a good dinner?"

"Here are some other jolly things," suddenly shouted Rachel: "soap, soda, candles. Oh, shan't we make our house clean presently?"

Shrieks from Tony almost drowned Rachel's words. He had discovered nails, screws, hammers, and other carpenters' tools, which put Ferdinand's humble little box completely out of countenance.

"Here's a cupboard with glass and china in it," said Rachel. "Oh, what a love of a cup! Isn't it jolly and thick?"

She held a hideous specimen of the coarsest common ware aloft with an air of triumph.

The next few days went by so quickly that the children forgot that they were lonely, forsaken, and that for aught they knew all their future lives might be spent in the desolate little island on which they were stranded.

Busy people are seldom unhappy, and these four were no exception to the general rule. They laughed as they worked; their gay voices astonished the white birds, who flew with croaking and discordant voices away from them. The land-crabs were routed out of the old ship; the spiders and the many other insects were destroyed with constant applications of soap, soda, and turpentine. Bell and Rachel washed and scoured, and scoured and washed. Their needles flew rapidly, their hands were never idle; and while Ferdinand, armed with his gun, and accompanied by Tony and Mungo, went in search of food to supply the larder, the girls got the home ready.

At last it was done: there were real beds to lie on, real tables to sit at, and food could be eaten off plates, and with knives and forks.

"I almost hope we won't find anything more," said Rachel, "for if we do it will scarcely be picnic-y enough."

"Oh, I don't care," replied Bell. "At the present moment I feel that I should never care to go to another picnic as long as I live. Oh, the delight of lying down once more on a real bed, even though the sheets are coarse!"

"And I," said Ferdinand, "would give this dainty supper which you have cooked so nicely, Bell, for the hardest chunk of English bread."

Bell held up her finger playfully.

"Remember our rule," she said. "No grumblers are allowed on board the *White Ship*."

Ferdinand laughed and coloured.

"There's one thing we must not forget," he said: "we must put up the flag to-morrow. When will it be ready, Bell? for when it is, we will hoist it up."

"It is ready now," answered Bell with a smile. "Run, Rachel, and show what wonders we have worked."

Rachel tripped into the tiny cabin which held her bunk and Isabel's. She came back with a great roll of crimson cotton.

"I found yards of this stowed away in a corner," said Isabel. "So here is our flag, and I think *White Feather* will be seen at any distance."

The words were worked in huge sampler stitches, and as they were quite a foot and a half in height, showed up in very startling and effective manner on the bold bright back-ground. Isabel had used the whitest cotton she could find in embroidering the letters, and the effect surpassed their expectations.

"This is splendid," said Ferdinand. "I promise that we won't be four-and-twenty hours older before our flag floats proudly in the breeze. The one point now to be considered is the best place to plant our banner."

"Sugar-loaf Hill, I should think," replied Isabel promptly. "The higher mountains are too difficult for us to climb. Sugar-loaf Hill, with this great flag on its top, can be seen a long way out to sea. Ferdinand, I have thought of another thing."

"What is that?" he asked.

"Twice or perhaps three times a day you or I must climb to the top of Sugar-loaf Hill, and look steadily out to sea with the old telescope which the poor unknown captain of the *White Ship* left in his vessel. If we see a sail in the distance, we must fire your gun as a signal of distress. I do think this is necessary," continued Isabel; "for though I feel we are going to have quite a jolly little home here, and though I would not join the band of grumblers for the world, yet still I do not wish to live and die on the island of White Feather."

The children now came on deck, where Ferdinand had put up a very pretty little awning. The sun was about to set, and they stood close together, looking out over the calm waters of the bay. The sky was beautiful, clear in colour, with opal and crimson tints around the rapidly-departing sun.

"It looks almost like an English sky," said Bell, raising her head and gazing into the high dome of blue above. "But what is that mist near the horizon—a grey soft mist? I have never seen it before. Were we in England, I should say it was a bank of clouds."

"And being in the island of White Feather, an unknown number of miles away from England, you may still look on it as a bank of clouds, my dear sister," said Ferdinand. "What is more, that bank of clouds means a storm. I doubt if we are safe even on board the *White Ship* to-night."

"Ferdinand, surely our little house can stand a storm?"

"I suppose we are all right," said Ferdinand, looking round him somewhat anxiously. "The good ship must have stood many a West Indian hurricane since it settled down in its last home. Still, you know how these storms rush over the land. Bell, we had better get under shelter at once, and fasten down all the hatchways."

Bell lingered for a moment.

"What is that light over there?" she said—"far off on the tips of those waves. Oh, how bright! Now it is gone!"

"Lightning," said Ferdinand. "Come down at once into the cabin, Bell. Come, children; come, Mungo. The next flash will probably be over our heads."

The children all rushed down into the hold of the little vessel. Ferdinand secured the hatchways, and fastened the windows. Bell with trembling fingers lighted the lamp. It was a small lamp and burnt badly. It looked like a speck of light in the midst of the gathering blackness.

Suddenly there came another light brighter than day. It flashed into four white faces and vanished. The thunder pealed overhead. The little vessel shook as with fear. Flash after flash came faster and faster. The roll of the thunder seemed never to leave off. The vessel creaked and bent from the noise which shook it on all sides. Still there was no wind nor a drop of rain.

Ferdinand went up to one of the windows in the little cabin and looked out. He could see well, for the lightning lit up the scene every moment. The sky showed like an inky black curtain overhead. Suddenly there came a lull: the lightning ceased to play and the thunder to roar. The children looked anxiously at one another.

"Is the storm over at last?" said Rachel. "Oh, I am so frightened! I feel as if I were all burnt up. That awful lightning—the flames seemed to run all over me!"

"How still it is now!" said Isabel. "Not a breath, not a sound; the air of this little low cabin is suffocating. Ferdinand, can't we lift the hatchway or open the window?"

"Hush!" said Ferdinand. He lifted his finger. "Listen!" he said. "It's on us—yes, I knew it! Bell, Tony, Rachel, follow me quickly; we mustn't stay here."

He rushed to the hatchway, tore aside the bolt, and let in a draught of air as hot almost as fire.

"To the cave by the beach!" he said. "Quick; we mustn't stay here! That's the roar of the sea: it will be on us in a second."

The children never knew, never all their little lives, how they scrambled down the sides of the *White Ship* and rushed across the beach. There was a roaring sound in the air as if all the waves in the sea and all the winds of the heavens had met. It was a deafening, crashing sound, each instant coming nearer. The children themselves were in a breathless calm, not a movement in the air, not a leaf stirred. The horrible noise was advancing: it would be on them in a moment. Could they reach the shelter of the cave in time?

They did so—they barely did so. A great cloud of sand was caught up after them, and sent on the wings of the whirlwind into their place of shelter. They could not hear each other's voices, but they could cling closely together. They were not the only living creatures that had taken shelter in the cave. Rachel, putting out her hand, touched the soft fur of a great wild cat. It crouched up against her cold fingers, tamed out of all savageness by the awful terrors of the night. Crowds of land-crabs crept in from all quarters, but the children and the wild creatures were friends for the time being.

Outside the cave Nature was having the wildest play; the frightful wind was followed by the, if possible, more frightful rain. This rain came out of the clouds like a great sheet of water, and as it fell the thunder began to roll again, and the lightning to flash.

It was at this moment that Ferdinand, who stood nearest to the mouth of the cave, saw a sight which caused his heart to beat with a great fear. A huge wave was rolling in—high it came, higher it seemed to grow each moment—it broke, awakening as it did so a thousand noises, its white foam lit up by the lightning into many lovely colours. Ferdinand saw that this great wave must have broken right over the place where the *White Ship* stood jammed between the rocks. Three or four more such mountain waves would reach the cave where the children had taken shelter.

"Must we all be drowned like rats in a hole?" he thought.

It was useless for him to speak his fears, for the voices of a hundred men would not have been heard. The lightning, however, enabled him to see quite a good way into the cave. It was shallow, and did not extend back very far. He saw that he and the other children stood in company with a goodly row of wild cats, land-crabs, a couple of wild hogs, and many white birds. He saw, by the look in their eyes, that all the creatures shared his fear. They all expected to die by drowning, and Ferdinand further noticed that the land-crabs and the cats were already securing for themselves the safest and highest portions of the cave.

In an instant he stepped before them. Lifting Rachel, he placed her on a shelf of rock four or five feet from the ground. She shared the same narrow perch with a land-crab, two or three white birds, and a huge cat, which pressed up close to her in its terror.

Ferdinand next lifted Tony on to the rock. He tried to say "Cling tightly!" but he could not even hear his own voice. Bell, with a smile—she always wore that brave smile in moments of danger—leaped lightly up on to a very narrow shelving point of rock. Here she threw her arm round Ferdinand, pressing him in close to her, and thus helping to steady his hold.

The next flash of lightning showed the brave boy the expression on her face. He looked into her eyes; he knew then that she shared his knowledge of their danger. Both the elder children were well aware that at any moment they might find themselves face to face with death.

The wild strife of the wind and rain continued outside; the lightning flashed oftener than ever. The rain, the sea, the thunder made such a mighty noise that the solid rock under which the children and the wild animals stood seemed to shake with fear.

Suddenly Ferdinand felt something cold touch his feet; he looked down; the next flash of lightning showed him that they were wet above his ankles. He clutched hold of the rock more firmly, leant back against Isabel, and closed his eyes. The next wave came in with such a splash and roar that it even wetted Rachel on her high perch. Ferdinand staggered; he knew that he could not long keep his hold. He closed his eyes, and his lips moved—he tried to pray.

SHELTERED FROM THE STORM. (*See p.* 296.)

The next wave came in, and the harsh salt spray dashed against the boy's eyes and lips, depriving him of breath for an instant. He looked up at Bell. She stooped and kissed his cold forehead, and slipped her arm round his neck.

Ferdinand's lips still moved. Another wave came in, and the water was now up nearly to his waist.

Strange! what did it mean? That last wave had not taken away his breath as the one before had done. He waited, holding his breath. Another wave came, but it made less noise; the water swayed in the cave, the land-crabs floated about and looked horrible.

Ferdinand felt a weight pressing against his feet. It was made by one of the drowned hogs. The waves kept on coming in, but their great force was broken. The spray no longer cruelly blinded, the lightning ceased, the rain made a soft sound outside—the storm was over.

"Saved!" said Ferdinand. He put up his lips and kissed Bell on her cheek.

"Oh, Fernie!" she sobbed.

"The tide is going down," he said. "Keep up your courage, Bell. In a short time we'll be able to leave this cave."

"Oh, but you are cold," she said. "How you shiver! Can't you climb up out of this water?"

"No, dear; something heavy presses against my feet: it quite cramps them, and that is why I am so cold. See, Bell: by that last flash, so faint and distant, we can notice how fast the water is going down. It is only to my knees now."

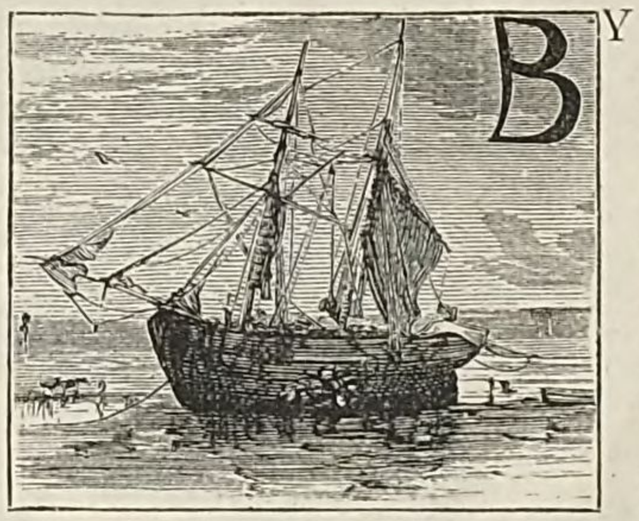
"I have got an idea," said Isabel brightly. "Do you think that heavy weight at your feet can be one of the wild hogs, Fernie?"

"Very likely," he answered. "It probably had a great blow when one of those first waves rushed in, and so got stunned, otherwise it would surely have swum about, and not allowed itself to be drowned."

"Good wild hog!" said Isabel. "Don't I see myself preparing a nice steak for your breakfast from part of his unwieldy carcase?"

Ferdinand laughed. Tony and Rachel both began to chatter. The awful terror of the night was past, and now the chief object of the children was to rescue the carcase of poor Mr. Wild Hog from the ravages of the land-crabs.

CHAPTER X.—MUNGO AND THE CRABS.



BY daybreak the great rush of waters had so far gone down that the children could not only leave the cave, but return once more to their home in the hull of the old vessel. To their relief the *White Ship* had not floated away over the ocean; she still remained jambed between the rocks, and they went on board her now with mingled feelings of delight and fear.

"We shall doubtless find everything in ruin," said Bell.

"But we ought to be so thankful to find the dear *White Ship* here at all, and to have our lives after the terrors of last night, that we must not say a word," said Ferdinand. "Oh, Bell!" he suddenly added, "I feel sick and faint. What can be the matter with me, I wonder?"

The children were now standing on the deck of the *White Ship*. The pretty awning had of course been swept utterly away, and the whole scene was one of bare desolation. Ferdinand tottered as he spoke, and Bell and Tony both rushed to hold him up.

"It is my ankle," he said. "I expect that heavy weight must have strained it. It hurts horribly!"

Fortunately, in the children's flight the night before Ferdinand had not forgotten to shut the hatchways after him. In consequence, only a small portion of water had entered the cabins, and Bell, tucking up her petticoats, was able to trip down the companion-ladder, and fish up an old chair for Ferdinand to sit on.

"In a few minutes the sun will make the air quite warm," she said; "and you must sit there and get your clothes dry. Rachel, will you try to take off Fernie's boot and stocking, while I get things into some sort of order

in our poor little house downstairs? Come along, Tony; you shall help me. We'll have to open the port-holes, and bale out a lot of water. Why, what is the matter, my dear?"

Tony, who had been looking to right and left, now gave vent to a despairing wail.

"Mungo is drowned!" he said. "Our little Mungo is drowned!"

"What? where? how?" gasped Rachel.

"Oh, I don't know; he's not here—he's nowhere to be seen—he's quite certain to have been drowned."

The children now remembered that the very last time Mungo had made his presence felt was when they were all rushing up the companion-ladder to leave the *White Ship*. Rachel distinctly remembered how the lightning gleamed on his amber-brown eyes, and how he looked at her with that kind of encouraging way he always had, as much as to say—

"I'm a dog, so of course I don't make a fuss; and if you'll all only trust yourselves to me it will be so much the better for you."

"Oh, he's dead, the darling, the darling!" she said now; and she threw herself down on the deck of the old ship, and cried as if her heart would break.

But Isabel, who was watching Ferdinand, saw that his face was growing whiter and whiter. She spoke in almost a sharp tone.

"Rachel, we are all dreadfully sorry about Mungo, but we'll think of him another time. Now, the first person to think of is Ferdinand. See what pain he's in. Don't be selfish; do what you can to ease his suffering."

With these words she rushed down the ladder, and standing nearly up to her knees in water, began to rummage anxiously among the ship's lockers. Opening one, she gave a sigh of relief. It contained a precious little medicine chest—the property, no doubt, of the late captain of the vessel. Opening it, Bell took out a bottle with a glass stopper. This bottle was marked brandy, and half its contents were still there. She poured a few drops into a cup, added a little water, and brought the mixture to her brother.

"The hold of this ship is a perfect treasure-house," she said, as she saw the colour returning to his lips. "There's a dear little precious bottle half-full of brandy downstairs, and there's another bottle full of quinine powder. I shall give you a dose as soon as ever you have had something hot to drink."

The rest of the day was a busy one for all but poor Ferdinand, whose ankle was painfully swelled, and who, in consequence, could not stir. Bell, however, seemed possessed with the courage and strength of twenty girls. She energetically baled the water out of the ship's hold, flung open the port-holes, and lighting up a large fire on the beach, dragged out the mattresses and bed-linen to be dried and aired thoroughly. By night the little house looked once more fairly ship-shape, and it was really astonishing to see how little serious damage the storm had done.

Ferdinand lay most of the day on the deck, and the children managed to erect a temporary awning to protect him from the fiercest rays of the sun.

"Well," said Bell, as she sat down by her brother's side in the coolness of the evening, and fanned her own hot face, "I own that in one particular I have been completely mastered. The land-crabs have made away with all our nice pork and bacon."

"I'll shoot a wild hog for you, Bell," said Ferdinand, "when this foot gets better. After all, I've such revengeful feelings against that special one that I should not like to see him even in the form of rashers of bacon again."

"Where have the children gone to?" asked Bell. "They ought not to wander too far up the shore alone."

"Oh, they are all right," replied Ferdinand. "They are a steady little pair enough, and Tony has got my whistle to sound in case of danger."

"Yes, that is true. I expect they are both tired of the really hard life they have to lead on this island. You know, Fernie, they are not English to the back-bone, as we are. Aunt Isabel is Spanish, and I think they both have a good deal of her nature."

"And we are English out and out," said Fernie, "all except our Spanish names. How did father happen to call us by them?"

"Oh, I know about that," said Bell quickly. "Aunt Isabel, who afterwards married our

FACES IN THE FIRE.

ARE you fond of curious things?
Look in that direction;
There's a host of various shapes—
Owls, sea-horses, lions, apes,
Goats—an odd collection!

And quite well they all agree,
No ill-nature showing;
For this happy family
Lives within the fire, you see,
As we watch it glowing.

FACES IN THE FIRE

uncle, was mother's greatest friend, and she had a brother called Ferdinand, who was drowned when he was quite a boy at sea. Mother was staying with Aunt Isabel's people at the time, and when you were born she called you after this poor young Ferdinand. Mother once showed me a little miniature of him; he was very handsome, with as brown a skin as Tony has, and the same great soft beautiful black eyes."

"As unlike me as boy could be, no doubt," said Ferdinand. "Well, Bell, I don't suppose I am meant to be drowned, for I had as near an escape as boy could have last night. I did think it was all up with me when that awful wave took my breath away."

"Were you frightened, Fernie?" asked his sister, nestling up close to him, and speaking in a semi-whisper.

"No: that's the queer thing; I wasn't, not a bit. I didn't want to die, of course; I don't think any healthy boy ought to want to die, but if it came, somehow or other, Bell, I wasn't frightened."

"Dear Fernie—dear Fernie," whispered Isabel in her gentlest voice. She laid her cheek against his strong brown hand, and for a moment neither of them spoke.

"The children are fretting about our poor little Mungo," said Bell, after that brief pause. "I am afraid that it is all over with the dear little dog, and I own I *shall* miss him awfully."

"What noise is that?" said Ferdinand, suddenly raising himself on his elbow. "Listen, Bell—do listen!"

It came rather faintly over the evening breeze—a long, low, somewhat uncertain whistle.

"It's the children," said Bell, turning pale; "they have got into some sort of trouble. I must fly to them. Fernie, here's the old gun; will you load it for me?"

"Aren't you afraid to use it, Bell?"

"I? No; I've fired off many a gun."

"But this kicks frightfully."

"Let it kick. It shan't kick the courage and strength out of me. Oh, there's that whistle again! Do give me the gun, Ferdinand; I'll promise to be ever so careful with it."

Isabel climbed over the ship's side, let herself drop lightly to the ground, and began to run in the direction whence the sounds of distress came.

A narrow little ravine ran up some way inland from White Bay; it was clothed with grass and some pretty tropical ferns, and several species of wild flowers covered the low-lying rocks and gave them a picturesque effect in the evening light.

The uncertain broken whistling continued. Bell began to run. She could not go as fast as she wished, for the narrow defile between two high mountains was up a slight incline, and the gun she carried was heavy.

As she turned a sharp corner she saw Rachel in the distance. The moment the little girl caught sight of her she began to wave her hands excitedly, to jump about, and to shout. Panting and flushed, Bell at last reached her.

"Oh, come quickly!" said Rachel; "it's Mungo! He's alive, but he's in awful danger. Tony and I couldn't go back to the shore, because we wanted to encourage him all we could by letting him see that we are looking at him. Poor little Mungo! we'd do anything in the world for him, but we can't drive them away."

"Drive what away, Rachel?"

"The land-crabs. They have made a circle round him, and they are all sitting up on their hind legs, and pointing their pincers, and rolling their goggle eyes at him, and he's barking and limping about. He's awfully lame, and he's all wet and draggled. I can't make out where he can have been hiding."

"Well, come along," said Bell. "My gun will soon scatter the land-crabs. Where are they, Rachel? Are they far from here?"

"That's the worst of it," said Rachel. "You have to go up quite a sharp point of rock to get at them. Tony and I tried, but we couldn't manage it. Oh, Bell, do try and save poor Mungo!"

"I'll do my best, of course," said Bell. She and Rachel had now reached the spot where Tony stood. He was on a little mound, and could be distinctly gazed at by the longing eyes of the captive Mungo, who sat on his haunches, threw up his head, and howled frantically into the air; then leaped wildly round and round in a

circle, and then threw agonised glances of mute entreaty at his friends.

The crabs had made a close circle round the poor little dog. But for his lameness, he might have defied them, and taking a high leap, have sprung over them into safety. With his wounded leg, however, this was impossible, and unless something could be quickly done for his delivery the wicked crabs would undoubtedly make a supper of him.

Between Mungo and the children lay a sudden dip or valley. It was easy to descend into it, but to clamber up the other side on to the shelf where the little dog stood captive was another and more difficult matter. Here the rock was hard, smooth, and slippery; there was nothing to catch hold of, and although only about ten feet high, the short ascent was so steep as to be almost straight.

Ferdinand was the best climber of the four children, but even Ferdinand would have found it difficult to rush to Mungo's deliverance over this steep and impassable rock. Bell took in the situation at a glance.

"I cannot climb that rock," she said to herself: "I could not do it empty-handed, far less carrying this heavy double-barrelled gun. There is only one thing for me to do: I must fire into the midst of the crabs. The danger, of course, is hitting poor little Mungo instead of them, but I really must risk that. It is better for me to shoot the poor wee doggie than to have him torn in pieces by those little horrors."

Bell turned quickly to the children.

"I can't reach Mungo," she said, "but I'm going to fire my gun into the middle of the land-crabs. Now turn your backs, both of you, and shut your eyes. Quick! there is not a moment to be lost."

"Bell, *do* be careful! don't shoot darling little Mungo."

"Turn your head away, Rachel, and do what you are told."

Poor Bell seldom had a harder task set her than this. Mungo's little sad face was looking straight into hers. He had drawn up facing her, and was now sitting erect on his haunches, the rays of the setting sun making his yellow eyes shine like jewels.

"Now I must trust that I don't blow your brains out, dear little dog!" murmured Bell. "Now then, which is the largest and most wicked-looking of the crabs—ah, that monster on your left, Mungo. I must aim at his eyes, as that is probably his only weak point."

Bell was a fairly good shot, but her aim had never been so close and critical before. She poised her gun carefully, steadily and surely measured her distance, then pressing it firmly against her shoulder to prepare herself for the violent kick which would be sure to come, she pulled the trigger.

A hideous noise followed—a crashing, crackling noise; the mountains took up the echo of the report made by Bell's gun, and sent it back on all sides. Mungo uttered a scream and a low cry. Bell could see nothing for a moment but a cloud of smoke. It rolled away; she saw some crabs kicking about on their backs, one at least lying dead, and, joy of joys! Mungo unhurt, and free from the chain which his enemies had put around him.

Notwithstanding his lameness, Mungo's dainty feet could tread where the foot of man might not safely follow, and it did not take the little dog many moments to rejoin his friends.

Then what joyful embraces took place, what wagging of a stumpy tail, what affectionate licks from the tip of a small bright tongue! What looks—more eloquent than a thousand words—out of the depths of two beautiful doggy-brown eyes! Bell, the heroine of the occasion, marched down the ravine first, carrying her gun over her shoulder. Rachel and Tony followed, carrying the invalided hero between them. Mungo was sufficiently true to his race to put on airs of consequence when his first joy had abated, and no king could look more dignified and more condescending than he did when he was borne in triumph up the sides of the *White Ship*, and laid on Ferdinand's lap.

"Now don't make any more fuss, good friends, but see about getting my supper," his manner said plainly, as he stretched himself out in this comfortable position.

The second evening on board the *White Ship* turned out a far more comfortable one than the first had been. Even Ferdinand managed to creep down to his bunk inside the state cabin.

The hatchways were fastened, the port-holes

left sufficiently open to admit air, and the tired children, after whispering short and fervent prayers, laid their heads on their pillows, and slept as surely no children had ever slept before.

This was the first night they had lain between sheets since they had left the Farm, nearly a fortnight before. Ferdinand had kept a faithful account of the days, and he informed them the next morning that it was Sunday—their second Sunday on White Feather Island.

"I vote," said Fernie, "that we rest all day, and take things easy. By to-morrow my foot may be well enough to let me hop about a little, and of course, as soon as ever I can, we must hoist our red and white flag on Sugar-loaf. To-day, I really vote we all do nothing."

"There's an old, old Bible in the cabin," said Bell. "Poor old thing! I believe it has been wet through more than once with salt water, but I think we could make out some of the chapters. Shall we fetch it up, Fernie? and shall we have a kind of little church on board the *White Ship?*"

Ferdinand nodded, and Bell, running downstairs, quickly returned with the old mariner's book. Ferdinand read a chapter very slowly aloud. Even Tony, lying on his back in the sunshine, listened attentively. Bell, sitting at Ferdinand's knee, drank in every word. Rachel, whose dimpled hand rested on Mungo's head, thought the Bible-reading more interesting than she had ever done before.

"I suppose it's all we have gone through," she said afterwards to Tony; "but it did seem to me that I could understand all that bit about going down to the sea in ships, and about people being brought into the haven."

"Yes," replied Tony. "I never liked church so well before, but now let's come up on the sands, Rachel; I want to gather a lot of shells against the day we are rescued."

"Do you think we'll ever be rescued?" asked Rachel.

Tony looked at his little sister in some surprise.

"Well, Rachie," he said, "you have asked a silly question. Now, did you ever read a book about shipwrecked people which did not tell about a ship coming in the end, and taking them away. We have only to wait long enough," continued Tony, in his comfortable confiding sort of manner, "and our ship will be certain to come."

Rachel looked at her brother, gave a happy sigh, and believed him. They sat down on some smooth yellow sand, which formed part of White Bay, and began to pick up shells.

Meanwhile, Ferdinand was making eager plans with Isabel.

"We may be rescued any day," he said, "but on the other hand we may not; and if we are wise we will make our plans as if we were going to spend at least a year on the island of White Feather."

"But we won't," said Bell, with a ring of confidence in her voice.

"Well, Bell, there is no saying. This island seems to lie out of the regular way for ships to come, for we have not seen a single ship during the fortnight we have spent here. It is quite possible that we may have to stay here until we are clever enough to build a ship to go away. And one thing is plain: we must not make a home of this good old hull; the storm which overtook us so suddenly the night before last tells us that very plainly. We must seek as sheltered a nook as possible inland, and there build a comfortable log-house for the winter. When it is built we can gradually remove all the furniture from the *White Ship* to our new abode."

"But, Ferdinand, how are we to build a hut?"

"There are lots of tall straight trees about here," replied Ferdinand. "I shall begin chopping them down as soon as ever I can move, and the rest of you can lend a hand in cutting away the boughs, and helping me to measure our stakes and point them, so that they may run easily into the ground. You remember how Robinson Crusoe managed, Bell? How glad I am I read my poor old 'Robinson' carefully now! Then the boughs we cut away will make excellent fuel for the winter."

"Stop, Ferdinand what is the matter with those two children? They seem to have gone crazy."

Rachel and Tony were both seen running wildly back to the *White Ship.* Tony was tossing his cap in the air.

"A sail! a sail!" he shouted.

(*To be concluded.*)

UP AND DOWN!

WE were "up" in the world, my dog and I—
It seems but the other day;
His food was the best, and he took his rest
Where softest cushions lay.

It came, somehow, we got "down" in the world—
No need to tell you the tale:
When friends and health take flight with wealth,
What wonder the heart should fail!

As I sent him away—for his comfort's sake—
To one who his worth would prize,
There seemed to be a reproach for me
In those great brown speaking eyes.

I sat in my humble room and watched
The shadows go and come
In the fire-light dim, and thought of him
In his far luxurious home,

When I heard a faint uncertain whine,
And, under the street-lamp's glare,
Weary and worn and tired and torn,
But constant, he stood there!

Then woke the courage, hope, and trust
That asleep in my heart had lain;
And I think, by-and-by, my dog and I
Shall be "up" in the world again!

ELLIS WALTON.

STORIES OF THE UNEXPECTED.

V.—ALL ABOUT GLASS AND GALVANISM.

WE had all been looking forward to spending Easter at Petherton Lodge, but our plans were upset the morning after our grand exhibition of juvenile talent, by the arrival of a letter for father.

"You will have to tear yourselves away after all," he said to us, handing the letter to Uncle George to read. "The agent says he has found a tenant for our house at last, but he wants to get in as soon as possible: so we must go back to town at once."

We knew that father had been trying to let our house, furnished, so that we might all go to the seaside for six months. Charlie was to go to a school at Eastbourne, and as he had never left home, we wanted to be near him for a time. But like many other nice things, this had not come just at the very moment we should have chosen, so we felt inclined to grumble, till father said he thought we might wait till the next day if he went to town at once.

"Now, uncle dear, you will have to give us a very fine show to-night," said Jack after dinner.

"Then you will please to make yourselves scarce all the afternoon; if you are to come poking your head round the door every half-hour to know how I am getting on, I shall feel like one of Minnie's bulbs, which she used to put in her garden and pull up every morning to see how much they had grown. Leave me in peace for a couple of hours, and then get your considering caps on, for I mean to puzzle you to-night."

When the curtain rose at seven o'clock, we were all astonished by seeing the stage in darkness except for a lamp from a magic lantern which threw a light on a round table; the gas was put out instantly on our side too, and we could absolutely see nothing but uncle's face as he bent over the illuminated table.

"Camera obscura!" exclaimed Charlie, who used to spend many pennies at a certain seaside town in the little dark boxes where you get such wonderful views of cliffs and sea and people.

"Don't talk Latin, young man," said uncle. "Listen to me. I see a lonely spot on the seashore far away. To the south I can see the slopes of Mount Carmel, where Elijah prayed for rain; to the north lies the city of Tyre, noted for

PROSPERITY.

ADVERSITY.

(*See p.* 304.)

its purple dyes. A river is running down to the sea, bearing with it the fine sand from the hills to mingle with that on the sea-shore. All is very lonely, and there is no sound but that of the angry waves, for there is a storm coming on. Now I see a vessel making for land. They are wise fellows, the merchants who are in that ship, for they are going to seek shelter from the storm. Now they have landed. The vessel is safely anchored, and the next thing is to get something to eat. The Phœnician merchants make a fire on the sand, and to do this they collect a quantity of the plant kali which grows in abundance on the shore. They sit down and eat the food which they have cooked, little thinking that they have thus made a discovery which will be a blessing for all generations to come. Now please can you read me this riddle?"

We made some very wild guesses, but father was not there to help us, and Aunt Mary, if she knew, would not tell us. So the gas was suddenly turned up, the curtain fell, then rose in about a minute. The round table was covered with glasses, big and little, best and common, and uncle himself was looking at us through a pane of glass, which looked as if it belonged to a window.

"Glass, of course!" we all exclaimed.

"Yes, it is easy enough when you know, isn't it? but I promised to puzzle you. The sand from the hills brought down by the river Belus, the ashes of the plant all burnt together, made a substance which lay on the ground after the fire had gone out. It sparkled, and it let the light through to a certain extent, and so it gave the Phœnician merchants the idea of making glass, though it was as far from being the beautiful transparent thing that our glass is now, as Master Charlie there, with his taste for tying up chickens' and dogs' broken limbs, is from the grand doctor he means to be. Now the next puzzle shall be on purpose for him."

There was not much to prepare, so we were not kept long waiting. Once more we saw the darkened room with the illuminated table and uncle bending earnestly over it.

"I am looking into the laboratory or study of a learned man who lived about a hundred years ago. He is professor of anatomy at the university of Bologna in the north of Italy, but I cannot tell you his name yet, or you will guess my riddle too quickly. He is busy just now making experiments with an electric machine. The door opens, and the professor's wife comes in; she is very delicate, and cannot help her husband much, but she knows that her very presence in his study cheers him; so she comes in very often, little thinking that her bad health will prove a blessing to him by leading to a great discovery. I don't want to preach a sermon, ladies and gentlemen, but it's just as well sometimes when we feel inclined to grumble and fret at something that troubles us, to remember that after all the cross may lead to a special blessing.

"Well, Dame So-and-so came into the room with a dish of frogs in her hand; which frogs she was ordered by the doctor to eat. Yes, it sounds nasty, doesn't it? and evidently the good lady did not relish eating the meal more than you do hearing of it; for the dish of frogs remained for a time on the table near the electric machine. It happened quite by chance that one of the Professor's pupils touched a frog with the point of a knife which he was using, and to his intense surprise and horror the creature which had before seemed as dead as a door-nail, began to move. Mrs. Professor exclaimed in astonishment, and told her husband to look. He at once repeated the dose of electricity, and finding the effect the same on all the frogs, he knew that he had to thank his wife's bad health for a new system of treatment. Now what was the name of it?"

"Electricity," I said, but that was not quite right. "Tell us the name of the Professor," said Jack after many guesses, but before Uncle George could answer, Charlie had jumped up excitedly.

"I know, uncle—galvanism; but I don't know the man's name."

"Galvani was his name, and it was given to his discovery."

"How funny," said Charlie. "When I grow up and have to go into the dissecting rooms I believe I shall think of those jumping frogs. Is that the last, uncle?"

"Yes, my lad, the last for this time at all events, and as you have to be off early to-

morrow I advise you all to get to sleep as fast as possible. I hope you have enjoyed your stay here."

"Oh, that we have, uncle!" we exclaimed in chorus.

"We have to thank that snow-storm for a good deal," said Minnie. "It is the nicest way of learning that I ever knew of."

"It helps you to enjoy things more when you know something about them, I think," said Uncle George, rather seriously. "It is all very well to have plenty of ordinary book learning, but if you can get down deeper, and know a little of the origin of the things which you see in every-day life, it makes you more careful, and it makes you more humble. Someone said once that every person should write a book, plant a tree, and invent something before he dies. Before we meet again I wonder how many of you will have done any of those three things."

"I'll do one this minute," said Jack, disappearing through the garden door.

He came in as we were trooping upstairs.

"I've done it, uncle. I've just put one of last year's acorns in the very middle of your lawn!"

E. M. Waterworth.

THE END.

TWO LITTLE RUNAWAYS.

"NOW, Sandy, my lad, ye'll take care of mother and Mysie till I come back"; and so saying, honest Farmer Neill threw his big plaid across his shoulders, took his staff, and whistling to his sheep-dog, started off to look after the flock on the mountain-side.

"All right, dad," shouted Sandy after his father, and he stretched himself out as tall as he could, feeling a man every inch of him. He had often been left in charge before; so when mother had put on Mysie's hat and given her her skipping-rope, away they went, "Toddlekins," the pet lamb and faithful friend, trotting after his little mistress, every now and again shaking his tail, and giving an impudent little "Ba-a-a," as much as to say, "Brothers are all very well, but I'm the real person to take care of her."

As Sandy had a lot of work to do, he put his two small charges up into the hay-loft, where he thought they could play among the nice soft hay, and where they would be safe while he finished stacking the faggots for winter use.

The morning passed very quickly, as it always does when everybody is busy, and soon mother's bell was heard sounding for early dinner. Down went Sandy's last bundle of wood with a bang, and he came trotting in, all breathless from his labours.

"Where's Mysie?" asked the boy, as he sat down to the table. "Hasn't she come in yet?"

"I thought she was with you," replied mother's voice behind the steaming soup-bowl.

"I left her in the loft, for I thought she would be safe there"; and Sandy's face fell visibly as his promise to his father to take care of Mysie came back to him, and he felt he had not done it.

"Run, laddie, and see. Maybe she has'na heard the bell."

So away ran Sandy, with a queer thumping at his heart, which felt as if it would almost jump out of his mouth as he got to the foot of the loft ladder.

"Mysie! Mysie!" shouted he, "dinner's ready"; but no Mysie appeared, not even a bleat broke the stillness. In another minute he was into the loft, but no signs of Mysie could he see. Where could they be? Everything seemed to be going round the lad as he stood wondering what he had best do. Find her, of course: he would never rest till he did so; but where? Not another thought of dinner had he; hungry though he had been half an hour ago, all appetite was gone now. Breathless, he ran round to the stable; then the hen-house and garden, even the duck-pond was visited before he would frighten mother by telling her the terrible news. But it was all no use, for neither Mysie nor her lamb was to be seen.

"Oh, mother, mother, she's gone!" half-sobbed poor Sandy, showing his white face in at the kitchen door.

"Gone! gone where?" responded the mother, dropping the soup-ladle on to one of the plates with a rattle which made Sandy start, brave boy though he was, for he knew mother was not to be trifled with when *she* let things fall.

"THERE NESTLED MYSIE . . . SOUND ASLEEP" (*p.* 309).

"Run, laddie, run, look for her, can't ye? and dinna stand there like an idiot!" cried she, and seizing the bell, she ran to the front door, making it sound far and wide, in the hope that the little runaways might hear it and come home.

"I've looked everywhere," replied Sandy, as he rubbed his shock head of hair, evidently in the hopes of getting some fresh ideas from the operation.

"It's no use, mother: she's wandered off wi' Toddlekins, and they've got lost: that's it; and I'm off too, mother, till I bring them home wi' me. Don't you worry; they'll be safe enough," added the brave little fellow, as he gave his mother a hearty kiss, half scared as he was at her excitement, and he started on his anxious journey.

Although only a lad of twelve years old, Sandy had been always with his father, as they were too poor to hire farm-servants; he had early learnt to make himself as helpful as possible, and as he had often to hunt on the mountain-side for stray sheep and lambs, he had also learnt to make the most of all the faculties he possessed—amongst others, the sensible use of his eyes.

Fortunately, now he had every opportunity to do so, as there had been a fall of rain during the night, and the ground being soft, he was able very soon to recognise the marks of Mysie's little shoes, and beside them the prints of Toddlekins' trotters; though at first it was no easy matter, for they were crossed and re-crossed by many others.

But Sandy's eyes were made brighter and keener by love, and he patiently followed the tell-tale marks till he found himself, much to his own astonishment, a good way up the side of the mountain. So intently had he been watching the ground that he never noticed how far he had ascended.

Every now and again he listened, in the hopes of hearing either poor little Mysie calling or else Toddlekins bleating, for they must both have been hungry by this time.

But no; far away he heard the sound of other sheep, but nothing near enough for what he sought. "Could they have tumbled over the rocks?" and at the terrible thought the poor little fellow sat down and hid his face in his hands, while the big hot tears dropped through his fingers.

"Oh, Mysie! Mysie! if I had only kept my word to dad and taken care of you, this wouldn't have happened!" and he seemed to himself a very wicked little boy indeed. But hark! what was that? surely it was a dog's bark. Ah! there it was again, and the lad's heart gave a joyful thump as he recognised the bark of his father's faithful collie dog.

A shrill whistle soon brought "Tweed" bounding down over the rocks panting to his side, wagging his tail, as much as to say, "I'm here, ready to help all I can."

In another minute his master followed down the rugged path, fearful that something had happened at home when he heard Sandy's whistle.

"What is 't lad?" shouted he as he came in sight.

"Oh, dad! Mysie and Toddlekins are lost, and I canna find them onywhere whatever." Poor Sandy's face would have touched a sterner heart than honest Farmer Neill's.

"Never mind, lad; we'll hear the rights and wrongs of it by-and-by, but we'll find the lassie first."

Sandy showed him the footprints which had guided him here and there, getting fewer and further apart as the path became more rocky. However, off they started with anxious hearts, for the daylight couldn't last long; and what would happen to the two poor lambs should night overtake them they did not dare to think.

"Hullo, dad! If we were down in the fields, I would say yon was a bed of poppies up there under that tree," suddenly shouted Sandy, as he pointed to something red which peeped out from under the low hanging branches of a tree further up the mountain, a little to the right of them.

"Never a poppy at all, laddie," cried the father, nearly beside himself with joy; "it's the bairn's frock." And without another word, away they scrambled, Sandy holding Tweed by the collar, for fear he might startle the sleeping child (for sleeping she evidently was), and make her tumble over the rocks.

Ten minutes' hard climbing brought them at last to the spot where the little runaways lay, and surely a prettier sight never was seen.

There nestled Mysie, close pressed against the warm wool of the faithful Toddlekins' fluffy coat, sound asleep. Fortunately for her, it was cosy and warm, for otherwise the little one would have felt the wind keen even in summer on the mountain side; but not a bit of it.

The first thing that wakened her was Tweed's warm tongue licking her face, for he had broken loose from his young master when he had got near enough to the red bundle to know what it was.

"My bairn! my bairn! Thank Heaven, you're safe!" cried dad, as he lifted the precious burden into the folds of his plaid, as he was used to carry the young lambs, and held her close to his heart.

Toddlekins, meanwhile, was more rudely awakened, and forced to make a more speedy descent than he approved of, with that teasing Tweed yelping and barking at his heels, as if it was the best fun in the world to make him break his neck on the stones over which he had to pass.

However, the little band at length reached the foot in safety, not without a good many jolts and nearly tumbles, they were in such a hurry to get home.

Dad's and Sandy's hearts were light now, for their darling was safe. Very soon they caught sight of the old farm, and there, sure enough, stood mother at the door, anxiously watching for them.

With a wild hurrah Sandy let her know the

good news, while Tweed came barking along, driving his charge before him, trying all he could to show his gladness too.

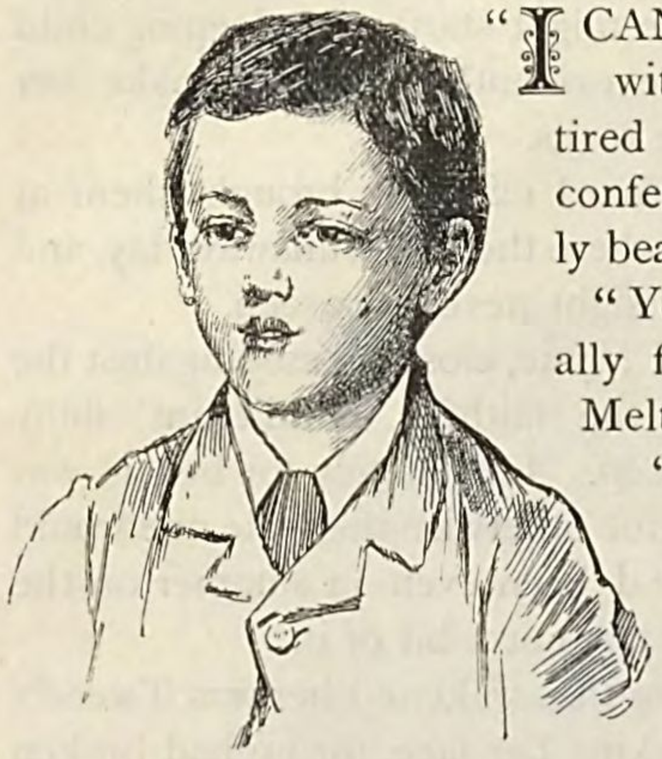
Mother could wait no longer, but ran out and gathered her bairn to her heart, as if she would never let her go again.

"Toddlekins and me will never get lost again, mammy," said the tiny voice, while two fat brown hands dried mother's tears away.

And this was the last time that Mysie and the pet lamb Toddlekins were lost on the mountain side.

E. Robertson Croom.

THE WORST BOY IN THE SCHOOL.



"I CAN'T do anything with him, and I'm tired of trying. I confess I'm thoroughly beaten."

"You don't generally fail," said Mrs. Melton kindly.

"No; I never remember entirely failing before," said Mr. Everard. "Well, I suppose I must expel him," said the head master sadly; "yet there's something I like about the boy."

"The boy" in question was Robert Ashton—Riotous Robert, or Bawling Bob, as his companions called him.

Never had the school known such a character. He was always in "hot water." Not only did he seem to have a peculiar faculty for getting into scrapes of every description, but he was the most unruly, careless, quarrelsome youth imaginable—the trouble of the masters, the terror of the timid boys, and an object of especial horror to the cook.

And well he might be! The conversation just related had really arisen from the trick he had played on that poor unoffending woman.

For some days past Robert had been on the sick list. He had been bathing in the river one evening, from Farmer Jobbin's field (a thing he had been specially forbidden to do); and after dressing, what must he do but stone the cattle. The most of them were frightened, some hurt, but the farmer's bull, having been hit by a clod, was so enraged that he bore down on the intruder and tossed him into the river. What with cold and bruises, Robert ceased for some days to annoy his companions.

In the Infirmary, as they called the room specially devoted to invalids, he was most quiet and orderly; so quiet indeed that cook was heard to remark, "she was sure mischief was a-brewing"; and so, unfortunately, it turned out.

The last thing on the previous night, she had taken him in some bread-and-milk for his supper, and just as she entered the room her candle was blown out, whilst at the same moment several crackers exploded at her feet. Frightened beyond measure, she had turned to fly, when in her path stood a figure at least seven feet high, apparently with two heads, both smoking, and the light coming from the mouths in a manner which nearly sent her into a fit. The figure advanced towards the trembling woman, who, unable to scream, rushed to the door, and opening it fled to the kitchen, where she fainted.

When a few minutes later the head master appeared in the room, everything was in its proper place, and Bob, to judge by his heavy breathing, slumbering peacefully in bed, and Mr. Melton had at first believed that the cook was labouring under some delusion.

No trace of crackers, no trace of anyone having been in the room, was to be found, and he was about to depart, when he was struck by the unusual length of the person in bed.

Removing the counterpane, he discovered a pair of stilts! Further search revealed two large white turnips, with a piece of candle in each; and last, but not least, at the foot of the bed, a small store of crackers!

Yes, it was indeed a difficult case to deal with. The rod seemed powerless to effect any

good, for the boy took his canings with absolute indifference, and seemed to expect a certain number of "interviews" weekly with the head master.

If only there were some way of engaging the boy's love, then they might succeed.

Just after Mr. Everard had taken his departure, Mrs. Melton entered the room.

"I wish we could do something for Ernest Mead," she said. "He is so delicate, and wants the protection of a stronger boy. He is so affectionate and unselfish. I fear for him where there are such rough boys as Robert Ashton. Can anything be done for him?"

The head master thought awhile, and then said aloud—

"This perhaps is the opportunity."

"What opportunity?"

"The opportunity I have been looking for. Put the boy in the same room as Ashton."

"Impossible! I could not do it."

"Yes, you will—just for a few days. You will trust me in this matter without my explaining fully, and I think you will find no harm come of it."

Mrs. Melton had some idea of what was passing in her husband's mind, and though unwilling to place this frail timid boy so near so unlovely a character, she at length consented.

The next morning the head master visited Robert Ashton's room. What happened on that occasion never transpired. There was no caning certainly, but Mrs. Melton, who went in a little later, found a boy of subdued appearance with eyes looking very red and swollen.

Thereafter followed a time when the whole school talked of the wonderful doings which had come to pass.

Robert Ashton was reformed, and no one knew how. The clever ones prophesied that it was only a lull in the storm, and that Robert was preparing some deep-laid scheme which would rival Guy Fawkes' plot; the masters looked on with contented, curious, expectant wonder. None of them now found toads on his desk or cockroaches in bed. No complaint was ever heard of pins in boots, or cans of water mysteriously upset when doors were opened; and the cook again looked cheerful.

But no one noticed, too, the tremendous effort this boy was making to leave his old deeds behind him.

Oftentimes the arm would be drawn back ready to deliver the blow to some offender who laughed at him or taunted him; for, wonder of wonders, boys did laugh at him now; at him—Robert Ashton!—boys who in former days would hardly have dared to whisper in their bedroom about him unless the door were shut.

But it did not appear to take away his pleasure in life—rather the reverse. A short sharp struggle seemed to go on in his mind at times. His face would grow dark and angry, like the Riotous Robert of yore. Then the boys would look frightened, but Robert's face would clear, and a smile break over his countenance.

But the saying went round, "The lion's teeth are drawn," when they saw how Ernest would steal his arm round Robert when he thought they were unobserved.

One day Robert was kept in for lessons, and the boys were having a game of Black Bull.

Now Black Bull is a very fine game for the robust, but the play is apt to be rough. A boy stands in the centre of a grass plot, and all those whom he captures in turn as they scamper across assist him in seizing others, so that gradually the whole of the boys are secured.

In order to effect a capture, a boy has to be "pulled" on the head three times; good thumps they generally are!

Ernest was sitting timidly enjoying the fun, when one of the big boys, Walter Hanson, happened to espy him, just as the game commenced, and insisted on his joining.

"It will make a man of you," he exclaimed. Ernest pleaded that he was not very well that day, but to no purpose.

"Come, you shall have no trouble," returned his oppressor. "I'll just carry you across."

Protests were of no avail, and soon Walter Hanson, with Ernest on his back, was the centre of a struggling group which surged and swayed and finally fell in a body to the ground.

Ernest uttered a cry of alarm, as he was underneath.

"Hold your row!" shouted Walter. More struggling and tumbling about, but apparently that cry had been heard, for a form is seen bounding across the playground, and Robert

Ashton, his eyes aflame with indignation, is upon them. In a moment he has scattered the group, seized Walter, and is bearing him off.

"Oh, I say, that won't do!" shouted Hanson. "Capture the two; let's have Ernest, anyhow."

Robert takes in the situation at a glance; the boys are annoyed at losing the fun, and are coming towards them with a determination which looks badly for their escape.

"Now, Ernest, you wait a moment till I engage them, then bolt as quickly as you can."

And not waiting for the mass to move on him, he dashed at the leading boys, and, single-handed though he was, kept them in check sufficiently long for Ernest to have time to escape.

In this case the boys, forgetful that Robert was one against many, were upon him like a swarm of bees, and ere anyone was aware of it he was at the bottom of a group of half-a-dozen who had fallen heavily to the ground.

A groan escaped his lips.

"He's hurt! I'm sure he's hurt," cried a voice beside them, trembling with emotion.

It was Ernest, who, regardless of his own safety, had after a moment's bewilderment returned to the assistance of his protector.

It was fortunate he spoke.

In a moment the boys realised something was amiss, and had risen from the ground. Robert attempted to do so, but it needed only a glance at his leg to tell that some serious accident had befallen him.

"All right, Ernest; don't look so serious," he said cheerily, though his face was puckered up with the pain. "You'd better carry me, I think," he said to his companions. "I fancy my leg is broken." So it turned out, and for the next month he was again an inmate of the infirmary. But how different were the circumstances this time!

Ernest was his invariable companion, whenever he could steal away, and loved to stay beside his much-loved companion; and if Mr. Melton would have allowed it, the room would have been full morning, noon, and night.

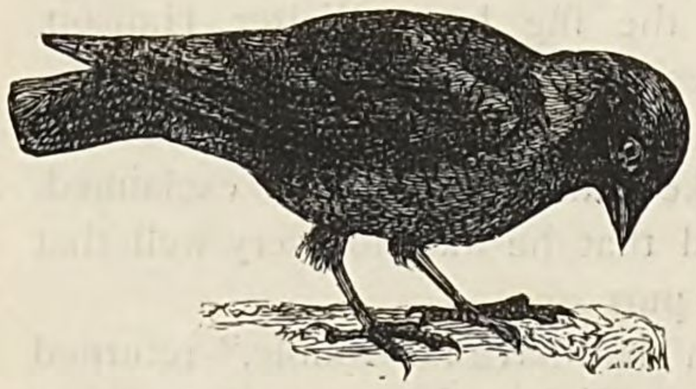
One fine day, when the shout of merry laughter from the playground reached the two boys in the infirmary, Ernest said—

"I'm so sorry, Bob, you're laid up here," and he put his arms lovingly round the neck of his companion.

"I'm very happy," said Robert dreamily; "and I wouldn't have missed the last two months of my life for all the gold in the Bank of England!"

F. J. C.

TAUGHT BY THE JACKDAW.



IT was our dog's dinner-time, and the parlour-maid took him a plateful of beautiful hot meat bones, as he stood outside his kennel in the yard, barking for his dinner. As he dined he was eagerly watched by a half-starved jackdaw, perched on the bough of a neighbouring tree. At last she could not endure this sight any longer, and at once she flew towards him.

"Oh please, dear, good Mr. Dash, do spare me just one little peck: I'm *so* hungry, and the ground is as hard as iron, and there is not a single worm to be had."

Dogs do not like to be disturbed at their dinner, so at first Dash only growled. But when he looked at the poor bird's dull eye and draggled feathers, he took pity on her. "Well, peck away," he said; "there is enough for both of us."

Oh! how the jackdaw pecked away at the bones. "What a delicious treat this is!" she cawed, when she had finished. She wiped her beak on her feathers, and said, "Thank you so much, kind Mr. Dash; you have done me such good." Then she flew away to the fir-tree grove.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Dash, as he curled himself up comfortably in his kennel, "I had no idea before how very much sweeter good things taste if we ask someone to share them with us."

B.

The Gingerbread Land

FIVE little boys on five big steeds
I met in the lane one day;
The little boys did nothing but laugh,
The horses nothing but neigh.

"Where are you going, my noble men,
Riding so swift away?"
"We are going to find the Gingerbread Land
Over the hills," said they.

Their cheeks were round as an apple sweet,
Their eyes were bright as the day,
And the rosy tint of their faces fair
Was fresh as the pink-tipped may.

Five little boys on five big steeds
Came back the very same way,
The little boys did nothing but weep,
The steeds had forgotten to neigh.

And I thought I heard on the rustling air
The words of a mournful lay—
"We have found, alas, the Gingerbread Land,
But we'll ne'er go again for aye!"

Five pair of eyes with a mournful gaze,
Five faces that once were gay,
Now thin and pale as a shadow dim,
And sad as the midnight grey.

The five small boys and the five big steeds
I have met no more to this day,
But I always think of the Gingerbread Land
Whenever I pass that way.

OUR SUNDAY AFTERNOONS.

MY JEWEL CASKET, AND SOME OF ITS WONDERFUL CONTENTS.

By MAGGIE SYMINGTON, *Author of "From Seed to Blossom," "The King's Command," etc.*

XI.—PEARLS AND DIAMONDS.

"GIVE me pearls and diamonds before all other jewels," I have heard several people say.

And a great many other people I know, long to have been born rich so that they might wear jewels so lovely—softly gleaming pearls, bright flashing diamonds; and they are things to be admired and coveted, are they not?

People speak of "the moonlight glimmer of pearls," and of the diamond's "fervid lustre;" these words describe them well. Many of you have often seen some of these beautiful stones; but even if you had not actually looked upon any, you could form some sort of an idea of what they are like without much difficulty.

The pearls and diamonds in my casket are more beautiful even than the stones. We have each of us seen them, although, perhaps, we did not know them for what they are.

It is the purpose of my chat with you this afternoon to help you to know the worth of these pearls and diamonds when you do see them.

Only the very rich and the very great wear the pearls and diamonds of earth, but the pearls and diamonds in my casket may be worn by little children; often little children wear them more frequently than older people. What are they, do you ask? Just this—the innocent thoughts of your little hearts, and the truthful words that fall from your lips; so we shall speak of the first as pearls, and of the second as diamonds. The two go together, you see. If your thoughts are innocent, your words will be true; if your hearts are not pure, your words cannot be free from guile.

I know a fairy tale—I daresay you know it, too—about two little girls who had such very different natures that pearls and diamonds fell from the lips of one whenever she opened her mouth, while from the lips of the other hopped nasty venomous toads. I feel quite sure that all boys and girls would wish to be like one of these little maidens, but I trust none would care to resemble the other.

Those toads, do you know what they are? Impure language, evil speaking, spiteful words, bad thoughts: these are the toads of the fairy tale. It is possible for wrong things to get into the jewel casket, you see, but with them we have nothing to do in these chats. I undertook to show you the jewels—or some few of them—which it was meant to hold. It is with its rightful contents we have to concern ourselves, and not with those which have got into it by mistake, or have been put there through ignorance.

If we carefully keep the casket free of these things, pearls and diamonds will be put into it as a matter of course. God means us all to wear these beautiful jewels—this is His will for us. The loveliness they impart to those who wear them is greater than that which comes from wearing any mere jewels of earth.

The finest of earthly jewels are generally worn by kings, queens, princes, or princesses. The Queen of England has a lovely diamond known as the Koh-i-nur, a name which means *mountain of light*. Her Majesty only wears it upon State occasions. As long as she lives she only has a right to wear it, because it forms part of the Crown Jewels, and she is queen.

It is just the same with the jewels in my jewel casket: the biggest and most valuable of these can only be worn by those who have a royal nature. If the casket is being kept for the King's jewels only, He will put into it the finest and purest stones. I have heard that the King has fairer jewels still which He means to put into the casket by-and-by; that will not be just yet, because the casket could not hold them now: their brightness would consume it. No earthly eyes could bear to look upon the

splendour of these jewels. It will hold them some day if we guard it carefully now, and keep it only for the Crown Jewels of our King. We cannot do this without help, but the Prince who came to seek and to restore the casket to its proper use will give us the help we need, if we look to Him for it. If we feel that we can do very well without His assistance, He will not give it: but if we are persuaded we can do nothing at all without Him, He will give it—oh, so gladly!

There was once a lovely little old lady who lived quite by herself in a tiny house. This house had a garden all round it wherein grew the sweetest flowers and fruits. This little old lady did nearly all the work which was needed in the garden herself. She loved the flowers and the fruit-trees so much that she liked to wait upon them. Her hands—such little bits of hands they were—tied up the heads of the clove pinks and dahlias, planted geraniums and fuchsias, sowed mignonette in quantities, pulled up the weeds, and plied knife and scissors in removing dead blossoms. She pruned and trained her own fruit-trees, she tended bushes and roots so carefully that they one and all repaid her by blooming and fruiting as none others did.

The little old lady had so many friends that she had no difficulty in disposing of the produce of her garden. Would you believe it, however? these friends never paid her anything at all for what they received. They took all the little old lady's flowers and fruit without being in the least bit ashamed.

"It gives her so much pleasure to cultivate them," they said; "and if she has the pleasure, we may just as well have the profit."

And so they ate and enjoyed the fruits of her busy little hands.

Her life might be the richer for all her toil: indeed, I am quite sure it was. I am also sure that their lives were the poorer for the things they took from her. Her willingness did not justify their greed.

My little old lady is a type of the Spirit that works in your hearts, producing holy and innocent thoughts. When you feel their presence, and take to yourselves all the credit of them, it is just as mean of you as it was of the little old lady's friends to take to themselves the flowers and fruits of her garden.

These pearls in my jewel casket—by which I mean all holy and innocent thoughts—are the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We cannot think right things of ourselves, but God's Holy Spirit will put pearls into the casket if only we keep out of it the things that ought not to be there.

Having pearls, there must be diamonds too.

There lived a poor man once whose house had only one door to it. That door was not a strong one, but this did not matter, for the poor man had nothing to guard. He left it open as often as not at night, fearing nothing from thieves. Having nothing to lose, he took no trouble to make his house secure.

Many a time he would have been happier if there had been anything inside his house worth taking care of. An empty house is nothing to be proud of; still it is better to have an empty house than one filled with horrid things. There is always the possibility of putting something valuable into a house which is not already filled with rubbish.

This poor man was sitting in his doorway one day, when a little child at play in the pathway which ran past the house stumbled and fell. A little fatherless, motherless, homeless, stray child of the streets, so he seemed to the poor man, who, nevertheless, stretched out his hand without a moment's hesitation and lifted the little fellow to his feet. His hands were scratched and bleeding, the tears raining down his woe-begone little face, but there was something in the eyes of the child that went straight to the heart of the poor man and moved it to compassion.

"Oh, do let me come inside your house and rest," pleaded the child.

"Come in, and welcome," said the man, "though it is only a poor place, and not fit for the likes of you."

He was looking into the child's eyes, you see, and through those uncovered windows of a little white soul he could see what was beyond the rags and the dirt.

So the child entered the house, and lo! a beautiful clear light seemed to fill it.

The man, startled and amazed, fell upon his

knees before the child, from whose lips came these wonderful words:—

"Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me."

From that day the man set a guard on the one door of his house, knowing that he had the greatest treasure of all to keep.

I have told you a little parable; now let me give you a hint of its meaning.

When Jesus comes to the door of our hearts, and we open it and let Him in, we must set careful watch upon the doorway of our lips. He will not remain unless we keep our tongues from speaking evil, and our lips free from guile.

CLOUDS!

CLOUDS will gather, little children,
As through earthly life you go,
And across the fairest pathways
Will their sombre shadows throw.
Do not think upon you only
Worldly cares and sorrows fall;
Do not think they pass o'er others,
For they surely come to all!

Well it were if only sunshine
Fell athwart your happy ways,
Well it were if ever golden
Shone the moments of your days.
But remember, little children,
Though the present joy may see,
'Twill not last through all the future—
'Tis decreed it cannot be!

Yet be strong, and meet your troubles,
Be they many, be they few,
Bearing this in mind, dear children,
That they mainly rest with you.
If you strive to do your utmost,
For His aid and guidance pray,
Though the darkest clouds may gather,
They in time will pass away!

EDWARD OXENFORD.

BIBLE EXERCISES.

49. How much of the manna that fell in the wilderness was laid up in the Ark of the Covenant?

50. Where does Jesus tell His people that they are the salt of the earth?

51. Where does Moses call God "The Rock"?

52. Where are we told to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness?

53. Where does St. Peter tell us, if we have to suffer as Christians, not to be ashamed?

54. Where is a dinner of herbs, with love, said to be better than a stalled ox, with hatred?

55. What prophet of the Christian Church foretold that St. Paul should be bound a prisoner by the Jews at Jerusalem, and delivered to the Romans?

56. What king of Israel brought great trouble upon himself and his country by following the advice of young men like himself, instead of being guided by the counsel of the old and experienced?

57. Where do we read that in the wilderness through which the Israelites passed there were not only fiery serpents, but also scorpions?

58. Where do we find the names of the spices of which the holy incense was compounded?

59. Which of the writers of the New Testament tells us to be swift to hear, but slow to speak?

60. Who headed the Israelites in their fight with the Amalekites, while Moses prayed for victory on the top of the hill?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE EXERCISES—37—48. (*See p.* 252.)

37. In Deut. xxxii. 11. 38. In St. Matt. iii. 16; St. Mark i. 10; St. Luke iii. 22; St. John i. 32. 39. In Prov. xvi. 16. 40. In Acts vi. 5. 41. In Rom. xv. 1. 42. In Ps. xcvi. 4. 43. Sarepta, or Zarephath (St. Luke iv. 26, compared with 1 Kings xvii. 9). 44. In Prov. xi. 11. 45. In Rev. v. 8; viii. 3, 4; Ps. cxli. 2. 46. In Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. 47. In St. Mark vi. 3. 48. In Acts xviii. 3.

ABOUT SOME DOLLS.

A STORY IN SIMPLE WORDS.

"MY dolly is not old enough to drink out of a cup—I must feed it out of a spoon," said Netty.

"Both Polly and Rosy can sit up nicely," said Alice, "so they can drink out of the cup. Polly, you see, is a well-grown doll; but Rosy keeps small, and I suppose she won't be any larger."

"No," replied Netty, "dolls don't grow; they never are any larger than when one first has them."

"Dolls give one a good deal of trouble sometimes. Their clothes have to be washed and mended, and they often want new clothes," said Alice.

"Yes," said Hetty, "one is always wanting something for them, but my mamma has given me some ribbon for new sashes. I shall have more than enough for my dolls, so, if you like, I will give you a piece of it."

"What colour is it?"

"Pink."

"Ah, that will do nicely. I have just made Polly and Rosy pink gingham frocks," said Alice, "and the pink sashes will make them look very nice. How many dolls have you got at home, Netty?"

"I have got two at home, and Dolly that I have brought with me—that makes three. I never take the others out to tea with me. They are much older than Dolly, and don't look so nice," replied Netty.

"But I shall see them when I come to take tea with you, shall I not?"

"Oh yes," said Netty, "but I daresay I shall have put them to bed, for they look nice in their nightgowns and nightcaps; and they have a very pretty little bed to lie in, with chintz curtains and a white coverlet. They are better in bed, for both Emmy's arms are broken, and Toodles has only one leg. So I pretend they are not well enough to get up; but they have very pretty faces."

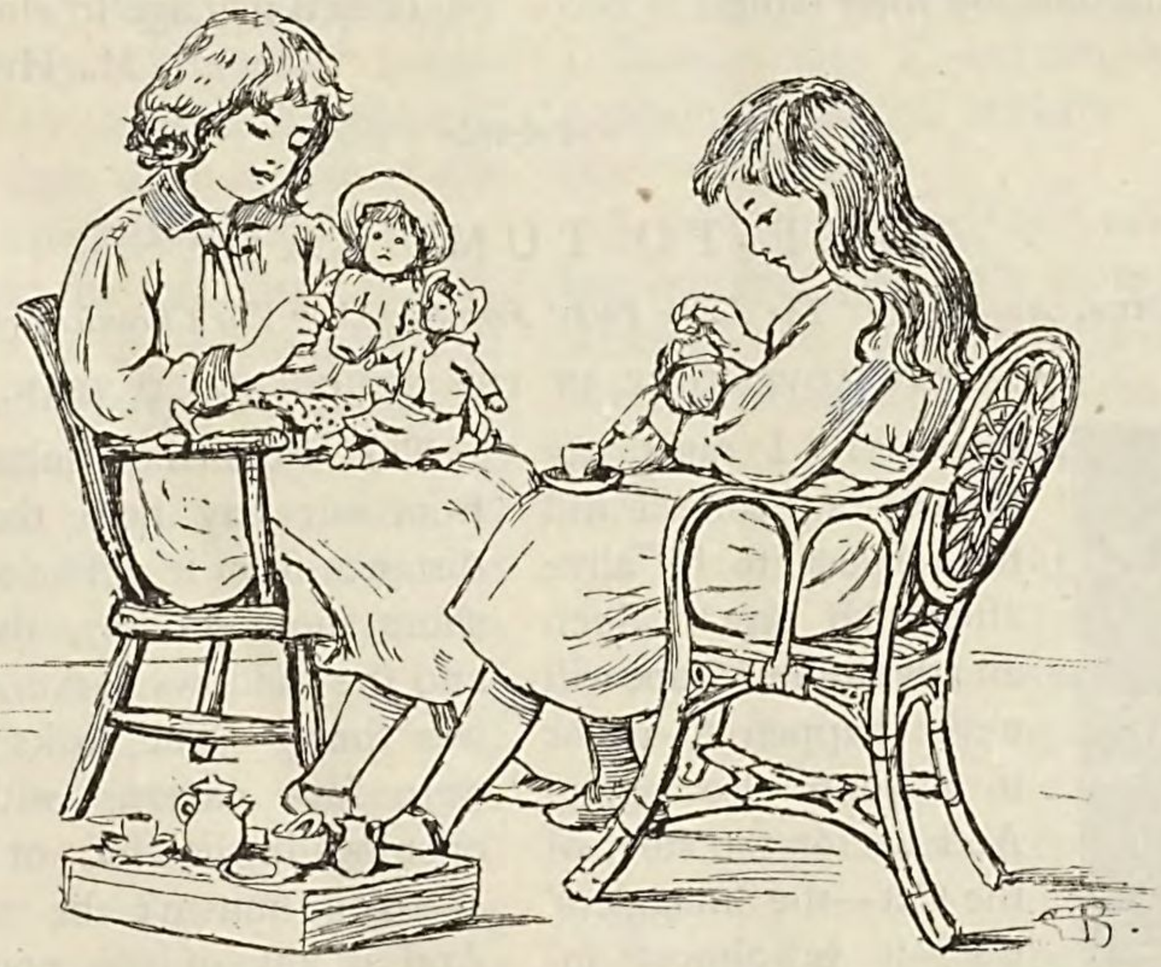
"That is a pity," said Alice; "could you not have the arms mended?"

Netty shook her head.

"I am afraid not; the bran is all out of them, and the fingers are all torn."

"Poor dolls!" said Alice; "I must take care of mine."

"You have no brothers," returned Netty: "now I have two, and they spoiled my dear dolls. Tom played at being a doctor, and he said Toodles must have her leg taken off; so Jack held her, and before I could do anything the leg was off, and all the bran poured out of it on the floor. Then Jack said that Emmy must be bled; so, though I called out to them to leave her alone, they made holes in her arms, and shook her till there was not a bit of bran left. Boys are very rough with dolls. But papa was very angry with Tom and Jack for spoiling my dolls, and he punished them. And now they leave my dolls alone."



"'I MUST FEED IT OUT OF A SPOON.'"

When Netty and Alice had played at giving their dolls some tea, they had tea themselves and played at games; and when Netty went home she made Alice promise that the next day she would spend the afternoon with her, and bring dolly with her.

G.

FAIRY FOLK.

A FAIRY is imprisoned
In every rosebud's heart,
And when you see the petals
Fall one by one apart,
You may guess the little prisoner
Is trying to break through,
A thing that prisoners of all kinds
Are very apt to do.

The lilies are their drinking-cups,
The mushrooms are their tables,
The butterflies their horses,
And the foxgloves are their stables.
The golden kingcups are their crowns,
The sunflowers are their thrones,
The glow-worms are their candles,
And their castles the fir-cones.

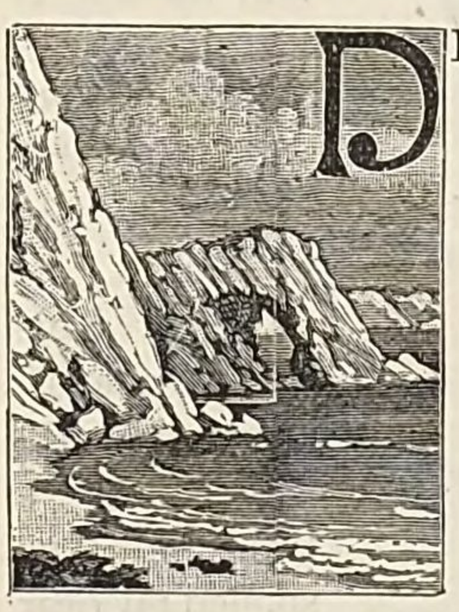
But mortal eyes may never light
Upon the fairies in their flight:
You may watch the rosebuds day and night,
They'll manage to elude you quite.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

TEE-TO-TUM TALES.

By LUCY FARMER, *Author of "The Little Folks' Peep Show," "The Chronicles of Cardewe Manor," &c.*

V.—THE ADVENTURE IN THE SMUGGLERS' CAVERN.



DEAR me! I must say that at one time I did not expect to be alive after that day! Such an adventure I hope will never happen to us or to anyone else again. And as for the story of the Cat—the Smugglers' Cat—it is almost incredible. I know some cats are very clever, but "Fluffy" was a wonder, as you shall hear later.

You remember that we left Price rather sad, and met the cousins, after hearing his story of Edward. Well, when we met the young men they proposed a visit to the Smugglers' Cavern.

By arrangement we met the cousins, who had made up their minds to take us out for the whole day along the beach. We carried small parcels of sandwiches and some bottles of lemonade for lunch, intending to come back to a high tea at six o'clock. We mounted the cliffs first, and so cut off a corner of the sands. Descending beyond the point, we came to another bay—a rocky, wild-looking bay. From the sands black rocks rose up all covered with sea-weed and mussels, and tiny coloured shells (which the children picked up) and limpets.

This cave was quite different in character from our bay near the pier, and was some distance from it. The sea seemed rougher, the shore more gloomy, the sunshine less bright, and the shadows darker. No one but ourselves was there. The rocks were grand, and there were four caverns within reach—four great openings in the cliffs, or rocks.

"You mustn't be nervous, Mrs. Farmer. And if any of you youngsters are afraid, you had better stay outside. Now, who will go into the cavern?" cried Tom.

We all said we would—if it was not *too* dark!

"Oh, we have candles," replied Ernest. "All right; shall we have lunch first?"

We thought we would, and then we should not have to carry so many parcels. We sat down in the shade of a fine rock, and enjoyed our meal. Then the children put up the lemonade bottles, and threw pebbles at them until they were broken to fragments. After that we made our way to the cavern.

It was a fine opening, something like the Gothic doorway of an immense church—very dark in the further end, with side passages into which brave people could climb. The cave seemed to penetrate underground for quite a long distance, and we went very carefully,

the cousins, holding thick candles, first, in order to light us on our way.

"This is a splendid place," remarked Bobby. "There are miles of passages: there's another opening there, Mrs. Farmer; look how the rock sparkles. May I have a candle too?"

His cousin produced one from his pocket, lighted it, and handed it to him.

"Be careful, Bobby," said he: "mind how you go; it is dangerous here. Follow us."

"All right," replied Bob. "I'll let you see my candle, and no one can lose me then."

"I would not remain in these caves alone for anything," said Annie. "What splendid dry hiding-places they are!" she continued. "I wonder whether we shall find anything worth keeping?"

"Perhaps we may come upon a case of silk or tobacco, or spirits," whispered Ethel.

"If we did, it would be no use," I said. "We should give notice to the coastguard, and the Customs officers would have it, of course."

Chatting thus, we passed through a long vaulted passage, up some rough steps, and into a smaller vault, beyond which was a door of iron, and beyond that again a circular chamber, in which was a deep dark hole.

"This is the well," whispered Tom. "If you could climb down you would find on the right-hand side towards the sea a large hole, which is the entrance to a secret passage, and people say this passage leads out beyond those distant rocks to the sea. So anyone could escape if pursued."

"Or bring in smuggled goods, I suppose?" said Annie. "These smugglers were like rabbits: they had plenty of ways to escape."

"Yes; and they could come down from the cliff overhead by a kind of trap-door and ropes in the rock. A few steps lead to a chasm and suddenly cease: so if anyone who did not know where to look for the rope, or if anyone came down without looking at his feet, he would step out on nothing and go crashing into the rocks. Bobby, you had better be careful here," cried his cousin.

Bobby made no answer: he was annoyed, we thought.

"But where is Bobby?" said Ethel. "He is not with us. Bobby! Bob-bee!" she screamed.

"A little stupid!" exclaimed Annie. "Come, Bobby, no tricks!"

But no one answered, and I became alarmed.

"He is hiding somewhere," said Ernest; "but we must return the same way, or he will miss us altogether; and, silly as his conduct is, we cannot leave him here."

"Do you think anything can have happened to him?" I inquired anxiously.

"Oh no, I should say not. But he may not find his way out very easily, as these openings have so many turnings, and you may walk round and round through the same sandy passage for an hour. Come, let us look for this silly lad!"

Ernest and his brother were greatly annoyed, and the girls were beginning to feel frightened. I thought that if the candles burnt out our position would be serious. And suppose the tide came in!

I kept these terrible fancies to myself, feeling, however, extremely anxious. Bobby was so reckless, and so fond of getting into mischief, that my fears were only too likely to be well founded. We shouted for him, and looked carefully for his candle.

"We must look at our footsteps in the sandy floor," said Ernest. "We shall soon find out in which direction Master Bobby has gone, and where he left us. Some of us will then go in search of him while the rest remain, and, if he comes round again, keep him until the others return."

So we did. Holding the candles close to the sandy ground, we traced our way. There were the girls' footprints and mine, and the two cousins' big boots, clear and plain, but no marks of Bobby's india-rubber-soled shoes—something like lawn-tennis shoes—crossed and scored on the soles.

At length, searching slowly, we reached the base of a mass of rock, a curious slab which sloped backwards. It was cut by ledges all across its face, and at the base of this huge scored slab Bobby's shoe-marks ended.

"He must have left us here," said Annie; "but did he climb up, do you think?"

"He may have done so," said Tom, "but it is more probable that he descended. Let us go down into this side passage. Mrs. Farmer, will you remain here or come with us? Annie and Ethel may as well come if you do."

We arranged to keep together, and stepped

very cautiously down into the lower cavern by a series of rough ledges rather than steps, which required great care to pass in safety. The floor of this rocky chamber was composed of pebbles chiefly, and pieces of sea-weed told us that the tide sometimes made its way into this cave. But after a careful examination we could find no trace of Bobby, and we all began to feel alarmed.

"Oh dear, dear!" I exclaimed, "I wish we had never come into this place! What shall we do? Our candles are burning away rapidly, and we shall never find that boy in the dark!"

"We must go out again, and send assistance," began Ernest. "So——"

"Hush!" interrupted Annie, "didn't you hear a cry?"

We listened intently, scarcely daring to breathe.

"No," whispered Ernest at length; "it's nothing—yes, yes, hark!—there it is."

"Where is it?" I asked, as a faint cry became audible. "The boy may be underneath or overhead. I will never visit any more caves as long as I live!"

"Hush!" said Ernest. "Let us get out of this cave. Bobby is not here, any way."

So we climbed out again, and listened. We had hardly reached the upper ledge when we heard a shrill scream, and before any of us could realise the fact, Bobby appeared and rushed past us, his candle, almost exhausted, flickering in his hand, and nearly extinguished.

We shouted to him, but he took no notice of us. Ernest and his brother immediately gave chase. They were not long in overtaking the fugitive, who, judging by footmarks afterwards, must have run nearly twice through the caves all round. When he was at length caught and brought back, he was quite dazed, and so frightened that we could not make him understand where he was nor who we were.

It was most alarming, but by degrees we soothed him; the frightened stare left his eyes, and he became more collected in manner. His excitement cooled down, and at length he began to cry. Then we led him out into the open air and walked quickly along the beach. This brought his senses back, but all the evening he was very excitable, jumping up in his bed, and screaming. So I sent for the doctor, late as it was, and he gave him a draught which sent the poor boy to sleep.

We ascertained afterwards that Bobby had climbed up the rock and crawled into a large hole which had been cut out years and years before, and passed through the cliff. He had mistaken the turning when he got out, and lost us, so went running about in terror, unable to find the opening to the beach, till he screamed madly in his fright, and we heard him.

It was some time before he entirely recovered himself; and his adventure should be a warning to all children not to leave their friends in such caves and caverns—if not for their own sakes, for the sake of those in charge of them.

SUCH A SILLY SHEEP!

THE rooks were building in the row of old elms which overhung the Home Close. There was no mistake about it—"Caw! caw!" was heard all day long over the newly-ploughed fields for miles; and then, morning and evening, as they came and went, a perfect chorus which drowned the notes of all the other birds around, and positively deafened one as one stood underneath.

One could not really even have heard the cuckoo, had he been about. But it was not cuckoo-time yet.

The inhabitants of the Home Close, however, were used to the rooks, and did not mind their noise a bit. Indeed, they made not a little on their own account. "Baa! Baa!" bleated the flock of sheep from below, as if in answer to the birds above. But there was good reason for their baa-ing like that. All the little lambs were about—lambs in all stages of long-legged friskiness: from independent big lambs, who gamboled about and played tricks with each other, even frolicking over the dignified curly-

MR. CROW'S VISIT. (*See p.* 322.)

horned ram, down to little, tiny, wee, woolly lambs, all ears and legs, who could barely toddle, or even stand.

No wonder all the white woolly mother sheep had plenty of baa-ing to do, to keep these youngsters in order !

The sheep and the rooks were old friends, and did not pay too much attention to each other, each having their own affairs to mind : which is the way to get on in the world and keep your friends. Every spring the sheep lay in the Home Close, and the rooks built in the old elms ; but this spring the rooks had a visitor.

" Have you seen the new bird who goes out to feed with the rooks ? " asked Mrs. Mutton of her friend Mrs. Woolly, as they lay and rested under the hedge.

" I've no time to see anything," replied Mrs. Woolly. " I'm so taken up with my delicate little lamb."

" But *I* have," put in young Blackface, a very conceited young wether, who always liked to appear cleverer than anyone else. " He *is* a funny bird ! He's got black whiskers on his forehead and his throat, unlike the rooks."

" Why, it's a crow, my boy ! only a crow ! " exclaimed the old ram, who liked setting down Blackface whenever he got a chance. "Have you *never* seen a crow before ? They are extremely like rooks, I grant you, except the whiskers. They are very wise birds too, and know a good deal."

" I hope they are going to build here, then," replied Blackface. " We are sadly in need of a little change in our society here—a few new ideas."

" Baa—baa-a-a ! " interrupted Mrs. Mutton, screaming at her very big and frisky lamb. " Come back, you naughty boy, and don't go turning summersaults near the pond, or you'll fall in. Dear, dear ! what a trouble lambs are ! "

" In fact," proceeded Blackface, " what with only ladies and children, and one old gentleman, I do find life in this field *rather* dull ! "

" We don't ; we haven't time to be dull ! " baa-ed Mrs. Woolly. " Ba-aa, baa-a-a ! " to her tiny lambkin. " Come here, you silly, to *me*, not to Mrs. Mutton. Oh dear ! if the little lambs would only know their own mothers," she sighed.

" Caw ! caw ! Good morning ! How do you do ? What nice spring weather ! " said a voice above them.

The old ram looked up and baa-ed a salutation to the stranger, who was dressed in a complete suit of jet black.

" What a nice voice ! " whispered Blackface. " Not nearly so harsh as the rooks ! "

And he looked up too, hoping the visitor would notice *him*, the only black-faced sheep in the field.

" I hope you've come to reside in the elms too," said the old ram.

" Well, no; I'm only here on a visit. I've put up with rooks all the winter-time. But I've got rather tired of eating nothing but worms and insects. I like a change of food ; in fact, anything almost, from a boiled potato to a dead sheep—I beg your pardon, a dead horse, I mean ! "

" Evidently a person of much experience, of wide views of things," baa-ed Blackface, approvingly. " So you don't mean to build in this hedge, sir ? " he asked.

" No, no," cawed the crow ; " too much company, too much noise for me ! "

" Ah ! there you are right indeed," said Blackface. " It is a bore always to live in a flock or a rookery, with such a lot of people. *I* find it so."

" Poor fellow ! " cawed the crow. " And can't you get out of this field, out into the world ? "

" Alas ! no," sighed Blackface. " I wish I could ! Is it nice, out in the world ? "

" Jolly ! " cawed the crow, popping down on to the grass and nipping up a fat worm he had espied. " Why, you fly about everywhere, high or low, as you please, here a peck, there a peck, and take your choice of all trees for miles round to build in ! I pity you from the bottom of my heart," he added, hopping up on to the fence, and eyeing Blackface sharply.

But the old ram, many winters old, roused himself, and turned to the crow.

" He does not need much pity, I assure you, sir ! Please don't go putting ideas like this into a youngster's head. I've seen many a sheep in my time go further and fare worse. There was one drowned in that pond once, and then two

were frozen in the great snow-storm, a few years since, to say nothing of the shearing season and the ditch."

"Caw! caw!" laughed the crow. "You haven't wings, you see, and so you can't get about much and see things!"

"Well, if we haven't wings, we at least don't get shot," grunted the old ram, turning away indignantly. "I like people to be satisfied with their lot," he added.

"Poor old fellow!" explained Blackface to the crow, much flattered by the interest the latter took in him. "He's jealous of me because his face is all white."

"Well," remarked the crow, staring at him critically, "you *are* a fine young fellow! I dare-say you will attract attention in good time, and see something of the world."

The crow flew off. His wife was cawing for him from a distant tree, and they had important business on hand: that of choosing a tree to build in. For crows are very fond of their young ones, and take great care of them, even carrying partridges' eggs to them in their mouths sometimes. This pair now bade "adieu" to their comrades the rooks, and, leaving behind them the noisy city the latter were busy erecting in the topmost boughs of the old elms, sought out a tree apart.

But the words of the crow rankled in Blackface's mind, and he longed more and more to see the world.

This foolish young sheep began to consider himself too grand to associate with the rest of the flock. He became too dignified to gambol and caper about with the young lambs, and he found the elders too dull to talk to. The lambs bleated to one another as they played leap-frog after each other's tails that Blackface was quite grown up now, and become very stuck up, too.

He took to prowling about the field by himself, peering through the gate and through every gap in the hedge to see what the world beyond, of which the crow had talked, was like. He could not see much, however, and only succeeded in scratching his black nose with the briars and leaving tufts of his wool upon them. But curiosity feels no pain.

At times, when the rooks came cawing home at sunset in a long black line, and settling in a dusky flock upon the old elms, Blackface felt inclined to ask them where they had been and what they had seen. But he remembered how his friend the crow had seemed to despise them and their society, and he refrained.

The famous conversation, however, was soon forgotten in the excitement of an event which occurred soon after. Another unexpected visitor came to the Home Close. But this time, though he also had two legs, he was dressed in blue, and not in black.

The sheep stared in surprise as he walked in among them, and then huddled together under the hedge. They were used to the farmer and the shepherd, and to Prince, his dog. But who was this?

"A very familiar and rather rude person," thought Blackface. He felt and pinched Mrs. Mutton's fine young lamb all over, and then came up to Blackface himself. He prodded and poked his wool with a stick in a very unpleasant manner.

But Blackface quite forgave him because he admired him so.

The crow had been very flattering, and had called him a fine young fellow, but the man in the blue coat thought more of him than that.

"Baa! baa!" he could not help calling out to the old ram, "here's someone else appreciates me!"

But the old ram only shook his horns very gravely.

"Pride goes before a fall!" he baa-ed warningly.

Then an odd thing happened, which filled Blackface's heart with great excitement. Blackface and Mrs. Mutton's lamb were separated from the rest of the flock, and driven away towards the gate. Not but what Blackface was delighted to leave the Home Close, only he was so excited that he got muddled.

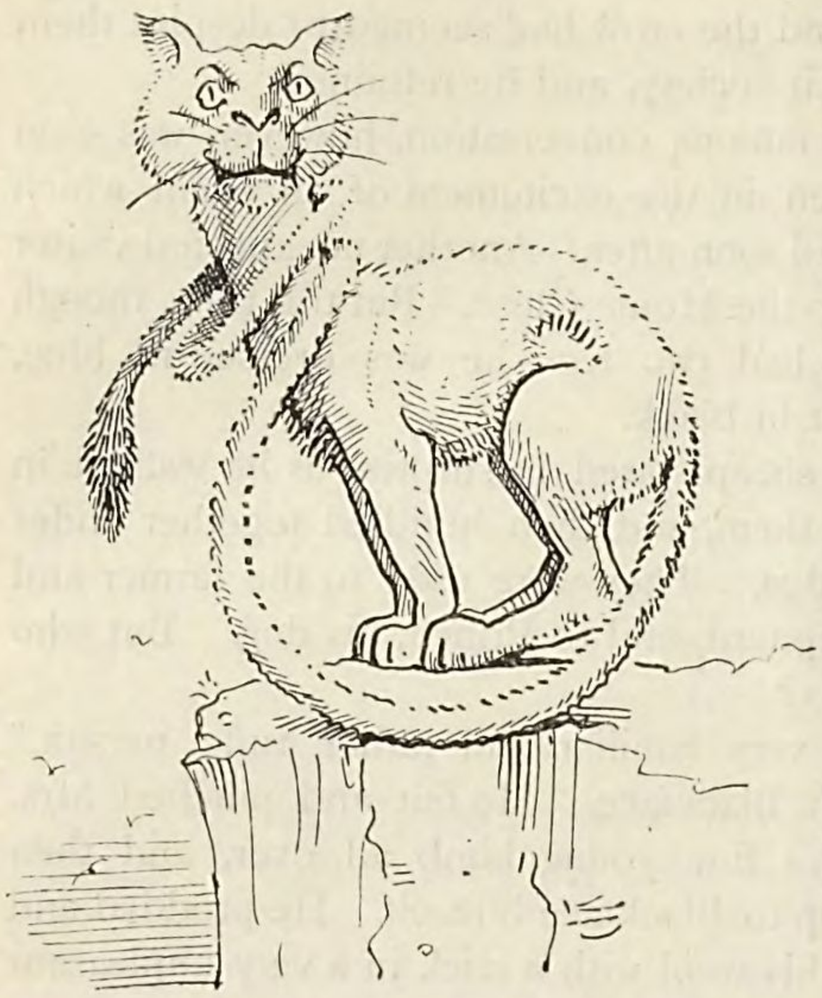
"I'm going to see the world at last!" he baa-ed to the old ram, as the gate clicked behind him.

But in the lane was a cart, and over the back of the cart a netting. Blackface and the lamb were hoisted into the cart and secured beneath the netting.

And then the man in the blue coat drove off with them.

EDITH E. CUTHELL.

THE CAT OF THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS.



I'LL tell you a story of Captain Cook,
Not written on paper or printed in book,
Of the way that he shot—at the picture look—
The Cat of the Cannibal Islands!

This cat was a monster lithe and strong,
With a rope-like tail remarkably long—
Ten feet and a half, if I don't guess wrong:
'Twas the pride of the Cannibal Islands!

As it pensively sat on a lofty rock,
At half-past four a.m. by the clock,
Cried Cook, "You shall have an electric shock,
Miss Puss of the Cannibal Islands."

He loaded a cannon with hard-boiled peas;
"Bang! Bang!!" Then all to be seen, if you please,
Was a trailing tail caught fast in the trees
That grew on the Cannibal Islands!

TO SCHOOL AND AWAY.

By H. ATTERIDGE, *Author of "Bunty and the Boys," "Uncle Silvio's Secret," &c.*

CHAPTER IX.—GERALD'S SISTERS.

WHEN it was late and quite dark our three visitors to Brighton went out for a walk. They went up and down a bright street of shops, and then along the sea-front, past the brilliant hotels. There were crowds on the piers, lights were shining, music was playing. The breeze, smelling of delicious seaweed, was blowing fresh in from the sea. Gemma had to hold her little black hat on as she walked by Gerald's side. The man never spoke to them, never seemed to know them, when they were out. He walked behind them at a distance, smoking, and keeping them in sight.

"My sisters are at school here, in Brighton," Gerald said.

"Where?"

"Oh! I don't know where the school is. It is Miss Skeffington's. They went to their school the day after I went to mine. That other fellow you saw with me made me run away from school. I wish I had stopped there. I say, Gemma, look at the light on the sea; that's a steamer."

"How does one run away?" Gemma asked.

"Why?" said the boy. "Would *you* like to run away?"

"I have nowhere to run," said the poor child. "I have nobody—only him."

And then these two exchanged stories. He told her as much as he could about Applewich Court; and how it shone in his memory now like a place of freedom and boyish delight! She told him, in return, how good her mother was, how loving, how dear: how hard she worked: how it would have broken her heart if she could have known her child would have to beg. "I can't help it," she said. "I had to wear that pretty dress; *he* bought it—Toto and me—every day—money—money! One can't run away to heaven; mother went to heaven; I can't—no! no!"

And poor little Gemma gave a great sigh, while the gay people went laughing and talking past them.

She asked many questions about his sisters.

"Your sisters ladies? Ah, poor me! Have they beautiful dresses? yellow hair? Do ladies go to school when fourteen—so old—fourteen? I am ten."

"My sister Fluffy is ten," said Gerald. "She's here too. They stay at school till they are seventeen, or more.

"Fleffay! What strange name! I wish see your sisters. Pretty ladies! But not they see me!"

She looked down at her shabby black dress, which was fluttering like a rag.

"Poor little Gemma! I'm sure Fluffy would be a brick to you."

She did not understand. How could she?

After a pause, "I know nothing," said Gemma. "Mother *teached* me. I know one prayer: mother *teached* me read: I read big print—not books: oh no!" And she shook her black curls till the wind nearly whisked away the old straw hat.

There was something very humble and wistful in the poor child's voice. She had been hearing about the rich girls in pretty dresses, who went to school till they were fourteen, or even seventeen or eighteen. And here she felt quite grown up at ten, with no prospect except begging and being miserable all her life.

"Gemma, I'll tell you what," said Gerald: "when I get away home—and I *must* get home,—I'll tell them all about you."

"Where is home?" she asked.

There was no place in the world that this poor child called home.

Gerald told her about the house and garden, the trees, the flowers, the little lawn, the children, "Ali Baba." They were walking along, with the sea breeze blowing on them, in the dark. None of the gay crowds looked at them; and the lamps were not bright enough to show tears in a boy's eyes. So Gerald talked of home, and let his eyes be as moist as they would.

Then a memory came to the Italian girl from not many days ago. Had she not seen those two fair children just the same size, and another with long fair hair who gave her bread; and a fourth just her own size, wild, laughing, and gay, delighted with the monkey that was on Gemma's shoulder that afternoon? "The lady," a person of most exalted dignity in this poor child's sight, had come out to talk to her in the garden.

"I was hungry," she said. "They were good—little lady gave me bread-and-butter."

And she remembered how she had run away, because Gerald's mother began to ask who sent her out to beg; and though the voice and look were so kind that she had never forgotten them, her fear of being asked questions was very great.

"Oh, Gemma!" said Gerald at last. "If we could only run away home together!"

Gemma whispered and looked round, to make quite sure that the man was not near enough to hear them. "Could we? I can walk miles and miles—my shoes old—my feet bleed—I don't care—they would give us a bit of bread at houses."

"Ah! but I have a better plan," said Gerald. "My sisters would give me money if I could speak to them. Then we could go in the train; it would take us weeks to walk as far as my home."

"See!" said Gemma, looking up, "there is a star!"

The star and the hope seemed to come together. It was a happy walk; and after it, Gerald slept well in the new lodging. He had hardly slept the night before, and when he closed his eyes his sleep was sound—too deep even to dream of home.

But with morning came that awful dream again. Someone was holding his head and blackening his face. He began to wake. No, the boys were not blackening his face; but it was true that someone was holding his head up, and rubbing his hair hard with a sponge. He was wide awake now, with a shout.

Signor Solfeggio was doing what he had failed to do on the previous morning before his prisoner woke: he was holding Gerald's head, and rubbing black stuff into his hair.

"Don't make a scene," he said. "It is done now, and can't be helped. Your light-colour wig was all wrong for the trade. You've got to be Gemma's brother. Come now: up and dress! Don't rub your head. It will be dry in five minutes; and if you half take it off, you'll have hair like purple pickles."

Gerald was resigned after the first shock. His hair was black. The colour was not very evenly

put on, but the man insisted on finishing it after breakfast. Then he sponged Gerald's face with walnut-juice, and sent him out with Gemma.

"I shall be close to you all day in the crowd," said he. "Don't look at me: don't pretend to know me, or I'll give you no supper. Bread and water for both of you if you don't do your part well. When I cough, you both begin to sing; two coughs and a sneeze—move on! And, mind, no smuggling of money into your pockets, for I'll see every penny that is given to you."

Without a word Gerald led Gemma out. He felt as if his voice would stick in his throat. But he had one hope: he might be able to see where Miss Skeffington's house was, and then he might contrive to send a note to his sisters and get money for the journey.

But what would they think of his being in Brighton? He could not help that. He should get the money to go home, and he would try to rescue poor little Gemma too.

Facing the sea on one side and the hotels on the other, the man gave a hint to the boy and girl to stand. Gemma had long been used, against her will, as a poor little beggar. But it was a moment of agony to Gerald.

The crowd gathered—the man coughed. Gemma, who had courage by practice, struck up "Two little orphan children, we find the world *bewildrin'!*" And as her memory failed, and the man in the crowd was frowning, Gerald opened his mouth wide, shut his eyes—being, indeed, ashamed to meet the gaze of the strangers round—and struck up the next line of the dismal duet.

Opening his eyes after the first verse, and looking through a gap in the circle, he saw what boys sometimes call "a crocodile"—a girls' school out for a walk. There they were; he could have sunk into the ground. It was Miss Skeffington's school coming near on the foot-walk of the Esplanade.

Fluffy was in the front rank; Edith was a little farther back. They looked towards the singing; Edith's eyes met Gerald's, and he thought she must have seen the glow on his face even through his new brown complexion of walnut-juice. But she did not recognise him. And no wonder!

Two and two, all the girls went by—taller and taller, with their pretty dresses and their merry looks, till the last walked beside a lady with a lace parasol.

There had been a day at home when Gerald began to mimic school-girls out walking two and two, and said he would enjoy seeing Fluffy and Edith like that. Oh no! he did not like to meet them now. Anything but it! To get money to go home would be one thing; but to stand before Miss Skeffington's school as a beggar-boy was almost unbearable. His face burned through the walnut-juice, and as he was unable to utter another sound, the man in the crowd gave two coughs and a sneeze, which was the signal to walk on.

He did walk on, but not as Signor Solfeggio meant. He walked at a distance after Miss Skeffington's "crocodile," keeping Gemma by the hand. He knew the school-girls were never allowed to look back; he was quite safe behind them. He wanted to know where they lived, and Signor Solfeggio was obliged to follow.

At last the school-girls entered a doorway with a garden beyond, and the passage from the door to the house all covered with glass, like a conservatory. Gerald and Gemma still passed on.

"Well!" said Solfeggio, when he overtook them in a quiet street, "what do you mean by making this round of the town?"

Gerald faced him. "I am not going to sing in the street again. I don't care what you do."

"Why not? Easy employment; plenty of money; holiday at the seaside."

"I'm not going to do it," said Gerald, feeling his cheek still flaming, while Gemma looked up at him with pleading and fear. "'Tisn't true, you know, that we are orphan children who find the world bewilderin', and all that stuff. And I don't care. I'm a gentleman's son; and I won't beg."

"You idle young rascal!" said his captor.

"No, I'm not idle. I shouldn't mind working. But begging—I shan't!"

Gemma trembled to hear him. The man took them both back to the house. They suffered just as he had promised. No supper—only bread and water. Oh! what a contrast to Applewich Court!

Gemma was ready the next morning in her

Italian dress, with the monkey by a chain on her shoulder. She was sent out an hour before Gerald. And about eleven o'clock, ready to faint with hunger, Gerald was told to take the hurdy-gurdy.

"Turn the handle and grind, will you?" said the man fiercely.

"Where am I to go?" said the boy—so unlike our Gerald now, with old greenish clothes, soft hat, brown face, and smeared black hair. His blue eyes made a wonderful contrast to his gipsy appearance. Signor Solfeggio could not help stopping to admire him as he shouldered the hurdy-gurdy. He looked hungry and handsome, and was just the sort of boy of "musical talents" that the signor had been anxious to find.

"Go towards the country. You said you would work. Now let me hear you grind to-day, if you want any food to-night."

The boy was subdued by sheer hunger. If he met the girls' school now, he would go straight up to them to ask Edith, Fluffy, Miss Skeffington—anyone—to rescue him, and give him something to eat.

Girls' schools have generally a regular hour for everything, and if one meets them one day out walking at twelve, one may be pretty sure to meet them at that hour any day—somewhere, if one can only chance upon the right place.

For some days Gerald, with his hurdy-gurdy, sought in vain for Miss Skeffington's school out walking. He was always watched, and as he made no effort to get money, he was half-starved, and indeed would have been wholly starved but for little Gemma. Evening after evening she came back to the lodgings, footsore and tired, in her gay costume and her gaudy trinkets, with her monkey in her arms. And when she had given the man her handful of coppers, she would find some chance of giving Gerald a supper of cakes.

"At the cake-shop they always give me," she said. "Take it—eat all. It is for you. He give me supper; he give you bread and water. There—take the cakes. Did you speak to the sisters to-day?"

"Not yet, Gemma. But look here, I can't let you be hungry all day for me. 'Pon my word, you *are* good!"

Her eyes filled with tears; it was such a happiness when someone said kind words to her. Was it not worth being hungry for all day, with the cakes in her pocket?

"My Toto is a thief," she said. "I had a jam cake for you, and Toto stole it. Toto eat jam; Toto love it."

In fact, the only things that were taken out of her daily store were those which the monkey managed to steal before she could bring them to the starving boy.

But even with buns and cakes added, bread and water form poor diet for a healthy boy of twelve, fresh from school. And the sea air sharpened Gerald's appetite to such an extent that nothing ever satisfied his hunger, and he became almost too weak and thin to carry the hurdy-gurdy.

If pen and ink had been in his possession, he would have written home any day to his father, and told all his misery and asked to be forgiven. And he knew quite well that his people at home must be suffering great anxiety for their missing boy, and that they would be only too glad to hear of him and to take him back. After that, even if he went straight to Applewich Court, would he not be thankful and content? Would he not go to Dr. Grindham if he could see him this moment?

While he was thinking these things one day, and turning the handle wearily, too used to the tune to hear it any longer, he saw approaching him at last Miss Skeffington's school.

First came two little girls with rosy cheeks, short white dresses, and large hats, then a young lady of ten or eleven with red hair, walking with Fluffy—his own sister Fluffy. Think of it—what the organ-grinder felt when he saw Miss Fluffy Brierly, in one of her new dresses of sky blue, with her fair hair peeping obstinately out in tufts and curls from under her sailor hat, and with gloves carefully buttoned on—gloves which Fluffy so disliked in her tree-climbing days in the garden at home. What a long time ago it seemed since he and Fluffy had gone swinging together, playing buffaloes on the stairs, and exchanging views on the promise of "Sweep" the pony? And yet all that was only a little more than three weeks before—a fortnight at Applewich Court, that happy place, and

AN INTERRUPTED LESSON. (*See p.* 331.)

ten days of sorrow and hardship since he was tempted away by Victor Maine.

The red-haired young lady of eleven was just saying—

"Do you mean toffee or butter-scotch? No, Fluffy, they are *not* the same."

"Fluffy!" called the organ-grinder, "Fluffy!"

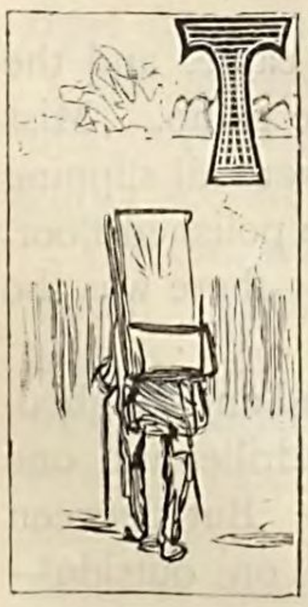
"Oh, the rude boy!" said Miss Emily Skeffington, who was walking near the girls in front. "Fluffy, don't take any notice of him. He heard Dorinda saying your name. Go away, you rude boy—go away!"

The "rude boy," as they called him, dashed into the middle of Miss Skeffington's long procession. All the girls ran, like a frightened covey of birds, fluttering out of the way. He tried to catch Fluffy; he nearly caught Edith, but she screamed and ran away, with the long tail of fair hair flying behind her. The organ-grinder had the fair hair in his hand for a moment, but only the black ribbon remained in his grasp.

Then, seeing a policeman coming on the scene, he fled, hurdy-gurdy and all.

When their fright was over, all the girls laughed—they thought him such a funny wild Italian boy. Miss Skeffington afterwards lectured them for half an hour; and Fluffy, who was very naughty, still hoped they would meet the organ-boy again.

CHAPTER X.—THE HURDY-GURDY.



THERE was not a girl at Miss Skeffington's school so wild as Fluffy. Had she not climbed trees at home from the time she was able to walk, and had not her delight been in tops, marbles, and cricket, instead of in dolls and girls' games?

Why, the very appearance of Fluffy marked her out as the merriest of the school. Not all the maids and all the hair-brushes in Brighton could get her hair to lie down. Up it stood, while the ink flew on her pinafores, and the needle stuck in her fingers instead of in her sewing; and whenever a blot flew or a needle pricked, Fluffy gave a shriek that made everyone jump.

The schoolroom floor was polished. Was it any wonder that when the hurdy-gurdy came outside Fluffy sprang from her chair and danced?

Edith, who sometimes kept her in order, was in the other room with the elder division. Miss Emily Skeffington had gone away to see if she could match some embroidery silk. The windows were open this warm afternoon, and the grey sun-blinds stretched down outside cool and bright, over the window-boxes of red geraniums and white Marguerites.

"I know it is that same funny boy," cried Fluffy.

"How he did run at us!" laughed another girl. It was Dorinda; you remember her—with the frizzy red hair.

Fluffy danced about on the polished floor, swinging her needle-work and singing the rhyme of an old game—

"We'll all do the best we can
To follow the hurdy-gurdy man!"

It must have been the sunshine, and the twanging of the hurdy-gurdy, and the brightness of the flowers, which were the only things they could see out of the shaded windows. But a merry spirit seized the whole class of girls when they saw Fluffy dancing. Two or three demure ones stayed smiling in their places, but all the rest got up and danced, singing away—

"We'll all do the best we can
To follow the hurdy-gurdy man!"

The room was ringing with laughter when the lady who had gone to match the embroidery silk came back suddenly, and was very much shocked.

"My dear young ladies—what conduct!" she said.

"The hurdy-gurdy did it!" said Fluffy. "Do listen, Miss Emily: it is the hurdy-gurdy that ran at us. Isn't it fun?"

Miss Emily told Fluffy to sit down and be quiet—which, indeed, she was always being told to do. Then the bell was rung, and the maid was ordered to give the boy a penny to go away.

"Have you ever heard of Ethelred the Unready?" Miss Emily said. "I am afraid I am acting like Ethelred when I pay the organ-grinder. He levied a tax called Danegelt, and gave them money to go away."

"And what happened?" said Fluffy.

"The Danes came back again, my dear."

"Oh! I hope the hurdy-gurdy will come back," said Fluffy, with a sigh.

She was not disappointed. At the very same hour next day, when the drawing-master was lecturing on the laws of perspective, his voice was interrupted by the gay "tinkle-twang-twang-and-a-tum, tum, tum!"

"It's our hurdy-gurdy again," cried Fluffy.

Mr. Easel stopped, and looked puzzled.

"Fluffy!" exclaimed Miss Emily, and pointed to the door.

Fluffy was quite used to being turned out. She went very readily now, and danced near the dwarf palms in the big bright hall.

"Please," she said to one of the maids who was passing, and smiled at her, "would you mind opening the door? I want to give a penny to our hurdy-gurdy boy."

Little did she imagine who the boy was—that he was her own brother Gerald—as she followed the maid along that beautiful passage, with the glass roof and the flowering plants—the way from the house to the garden door.

"Let me give it to him, miss," the servant said.

"No—please! I want to give it myself."

And out ran Fluffy, "as mad as a March hare."

"Come to-morrow! come every day!" she cried to him merrily, and flung a penny jingling towards the hurdy-gurdy.

In a moment she was gone again. He had made a step forward, but she thought it was only to pick up the penny and to thank her; and she had turned away at once and darted in, so as not to keep the servant holding the door open.

"Maybe the mistress wouldn't like me to let you run out like that. I mustn't again, Miss Fluffy," said the maid, shutting the door. "Let me tie your sash for you, miss; see, it is all pulled undone. And oh dear me, miss, you've torn your dress again!"

But hardly was the sash tied when Fluffy danced away along the glass passage, past all the flowers, and up the step and into the hall, little thinking that poor Gerald, very tired and hungry, was outside grinding the unmusical instrument that gave her so much delight.

It was the dancing lesson on the next afternoon—the first dancing lesson this term; and how welcome it was to Miss Skeffington's girls! They "tidied themselves up," as girls say. Hair was smoothed, and curls put in order, and gloves taken out, while they chattered about parties—for of course dancing reminded them of the Christmas parties that were still so far off in the holidays. Muslin pinafores and sashes were tied for the little ones; best dresses and flowers by the big ones. And then there was such delightful confusion upstairs about getting on the shoes. It must be so nearly four o'clock, and Lottie's bronze shoes would not go on, and Mira had a red one and couldn't find the other, and Polly wanted to know if her white ones looked too soiled, and Edith Brierly was very much admired because she had such a pretty pair of dancing-shoes. Edith put them on, and got somebody else to tie her hair. "Down near the end, please. Is it all smooth and straight? I lost my new black ribbon the other day. Such a bother! I think that nasty boy pulled it off."

Well, they were all ready at last when the clock that chimed in the hall was just ringing merrily its little peal for the hour, and four clear bells for four o'clock.

The largest schoolroom was cleared, and a piano was pushed into the farthest corner. Only a row of chairs remained all round the wall. Again the windows were open, and the cool sun-blinds of striped grey were drawn down as far as the boxes of bright flowers.

The French dancing-mistress came, and the assistant in black, who played the piano. Miss Skeffington's twenty-seven girls were all slipping their heels and toes about on the polished floor, impatient to begin, when hark!—there was the hurdy-gurdy outside again.

Fluffy and the little ones jumped and laughed. Then the music began for a quadrille, and one could not hear the hurdy-gurdy. But between the figures it was still going on outside—"Tinkle, tinkle, twang-twang—tum, tum, *tum!*" And everybody laughed gaily.

When the dancing lesson had gone on for an hour, the maids arrived; they placed a little table near the window, and brought in abundant supplies of afternoon tea and cake—very welcome to the girls, who were fanning them-

selves, and saying how hot it was, and exchanging sympathy for the bursting of a glove or the pinching of a shoe.

"Oh, here's tea! That's lovely!"

But outside the hurdy-gurdy was still going on: "Tinkle, tinkle, twang-twang, tum tum *tum!*"

Miss Skeffington came in to see the last dance. Fluffy had been having an argument with Miss Emily: the child wanted to send out a penny to "the poor hurdy-gurdy," and Miss Emily was repeating her remark about Ethelred the Unready and the Danes.

"Oh, please, Miss Skeffington, may I not?" pleaded Fluffy, with a large piece of cake in her hand.

The elder Miss Skeffington was a dear old lady, with silvery hair and a lace cap.

"Well, Emily, my dear," she said to her sister, "I think we shall give to 'the Danes' this once. Whoever is turning that handle must be tired. Here, Jane, take out these coppers to him, and tell him he must *not* come again."

"Oh! thank you," cried Fluffy, and sprang out of the room.

She danced across the hall, and down the glass passage, singing—

"We'll all do the best we can
To follow the hurdy-gurdy man!"

The maid would not open the door till Fluffy promised not to run out.

"All right; I promise," said Fluffy. "Do open quick. The poor hurdy-gurdy boy is right up against the door."

The moment the door was opened to give him out the coppers, the boy sprang in, hurdy-gurdy and all.

He did not want the money; he did not take it. But he fastened the door with a bang behind him. Just at the same moment a rough-bearded man was hurrying across the street to catch him. The door was shut before the man in pursuit reached it—yes, the door of Miss Skeffington's school for young ladies; and the hurdy-gurdy boy had shut himself in.

"Fluffy!" he called.

Fluffy was frightened. She ran away along the glass passage. The boy ran after her, with the hurdy-gurdy on his back.

The girls were all beginning to dance again, and Miss Skeffington was fanning herself at the tea-table in the corner, and looking on, when the door was burst open, and in came Fluffy screaming, closely followed by the boy.

Her short fair hair was on end as usual, her sash was flying loose, and the boy with the hurdy-gurdy had caught her by one end of it as she ran along.

The music stopped; the dancers stood still; and Fluffy and the hurdy-gurdy boy went sliding into the middle of the floor together, and there stood facing each other.

"Fluffy! I am Gerald!"

She hardly heard him; she could not understand. He was a black-haired, brown-faced lad, thin in the face, with a wild sad look about his blue eyes—strangely blue eyes for such a dark boy.

"Take your hands off that child!" cried Miss Emily. "Go away out, you rude boy!"

But the elder sister, the lady with the lace cap and silvery hair, rose and came to speak to him more quietly.

"I sent you money to go away. You must not come into the house like this."

Some of the girls had screamed, others were laughing. Edith Brierly saw with disgust that his shoes had brought in earth from the street on their nice polished floor; and then she took advantage of the general interest in the boy to take a quiet peep in the glass, arrange her hair, and wish that dancing did not make her fair face look so hot.

The dark-haired boy had let Fluffy's sash go. "Come with me!" said Miss Skeffington, laying a gentle hand on his arm.

"I can't go out again!" cried Gerald. "I won't go out now I've got in—I won't, I won't!"

After this all the girls crowded round him, though rather timidly, as if they were afraid he might go charging through them with the hurdy-gurdy at any moment.

"Fluffy is my sister," he called out; "so is Edith—over there with the long hair. Edith! Fluffy! I'm awfully sorry to bother you like this; but I am Gerald."

And flinging the hurdy-gurdy on the floor, he sank sitting on it, and remained there comfortably, partly through exhaustion, and partly to show that he meant to stay where he was.

"The boy is raving!" said Miss Skeffington.

"He is not my brother—of course not," said Edith, very angry because the other girls *would* laugh.

Fluffy heard Gerald's voice; but this boy was dark, thin, in dirty clothes. She stood and gazed at him, unable to speak.

"This is a most disgraceful scene," said Miss Emily. "We must send for a policeman."

"No! don't! don't!" shouted the boy. And he got up enough strength to struggle to the door, and having placed the hurdy-gurdy against it, he sat there, and no one could come in or go out.

"Poor boy!" said Miss Skeffington. "We shall not talk of the police. But you will go now if I give you sixpence, won't you?"

"I can't," said Gerald. "There's a man in the street waiting to catch me."

"Oh, nonsense!" from Miss Emily.

"He beat me, and starved me," said Gerald, whose face was indeed worn with hunger; "and he made me go out grinding this thing every day; and I want money to go home."

"Give the boy a shilling, and send him out by the back way," said Miss Skeffington mildly. "He *is* afraid of somebody."

"It's all true," said Gerald. "Oh, I beg your pardon!"

He had forgotten to take off his hat, and he now snatched it from his head, and clasped his knees again with his hands as he sat, firm as a rock, on the hurdy-gurdy, determined not to move his back from the door.

"It is Gerald!" shrieked Fluffy, when she saw him without his hat. "There's something black on his hair. It's all light on top. Edith—it *is* Gerald!"

And she flung herself on her knees, and clasped the hurdy-gurdy boy round the neck with great pity and affection.

"Fluffy, you little goose! it isn't," from Edith.

"It *is*, I tell you," from Fluffy, who was kissing him vigorously, and being kissed in return.

"The child is quite right," said Miss Skeffington to her sister. "That boy's hair is painted. Look at his blue eyes—his eyelashes are bright brown. His face is all smeared, too."

And then Edith recognised him. She did not kiss him; she was afraid the others would laugh, because she was dressed-up and trim, and he so painted and dirty. But she said—

"Oh, Gerald—you naughty boy!"

"I know I am," said Gerald. Fluffy had let go his neck by this time, but was still kneeling beside him. He looked up at Miss Skeffington. "I am very weak. I ran away from school. Please would you give me a cup of tea and a piece of bread-and-butter?"

The acknowledgment of his faults and the request for bread-and-butter, coming almost in a breath, amused the girls, and set them all laughing again. With Miss Skeffington's leave, one ran for the cup of tea, another for bread, another brought cake. He was too faint to stand up; and as he sat on the old hurdy-gurdy and leaned against the door, he took bread, and cake, and tea as if he was starved.

Then he thanked everybody, and got up.

"If you'll give me some money, Edith," he said, "I'll go home; but I hope *he* won't catch me before I get to the station."

The ladies who kept the school would not allow the boy to be sent away like that, now that they knew he was really the brother of the Brierly girls.

Twenty-five of the pupils had to remain in tortures of curiosity, for the hurdy-gurdy boy was led away with his sisters into the other room. Miss Emily, who was greatly shocked, remained to set going another dance for those who were dying of curiosity. But Miss Skeffington herself had a talk in her own parlour with the two girls and the boy.

He told all his tale. He had run away from Applewich Court, and he had fallen into the hands of a cruel man, who entrapped him by offering work and money to boys of musical talents. And he wished now that he could get back to Applewich Court, or above all that he could go to his father and mother.

"Father told me not to make a friend of the boy I ran away with," he said bitterly; "and I wish I hadn't now."

"I think," said Miss Skeffington, "the first thing to do is to send your father a telegram. He must be in terrible anxiety; and your poor mother, too!"

Then surely it was more to his credit than

anything else, if tears began to make marks, trickling down the walnut-stained face.

"I never thought!" said Gerald; and leaning his elbow on the table, he buried his face upon his hands.

"Don't lose heart, my boy," said the silver-haired lady, with a kind hand on his shoulder. "You know, it is never too late to mend; and think how happy you can make your father and mother *from now*."

An answer came to the telegram.

Gerald's father was coming.

(*To be concluded.*)

LITTLE MILKMAIDS.

FOUR-AND-TWENTY milkmaids
Marching out to milk
Four-and-twenty Alderneys,
With coats as soft as silk;

Four-and-twenty schoolboys,
Hungry as could be;
Four-and-twenty merry lads
Clamouring for tea.

When their work was ended
The maids began to sing,
"We'd rather go a-milking
Than breakfast with the king!"

When their tea was over
The boys began to play:
Work was done for everyone
Upon that summer day.

FROM OVER THE SEA.

V.—A FLEECE FROM THE ANTIPODES.

SUPPOSING it were possible to dig a hole right through the centre of the earth, have you any idea where the diggers would find themselves when they crept out into daylight at the other end? At the Antipodes: yes; but where is that? I may as well tell you at once it would be New Zealand; and as there is something very interesting to be seen there—an industry which benefits us all, rich and poor alike—I think we cannot do better than take a trip to this far-distant colony over the sea, and learn all we can about it.

A celebrated Frenchman once said that the English were a nation of shopkeepers. I think we might say with more truth that the New Zealanders are a nation of sheep-growers. From all parts of their sunny plains and breezy hills arises the sound of "woolly" bleating, and all the year round it is "woolly" who gives employment to thousands of sunburnt active men and boys.

Little folk who have only seen a flock of sheep feeding in a green English meadow, or being driven along a shady country lane to be

washed in a bubbling little brook, and afterwards shorn carefully, one by one, in a straw-covered barn, can have no idea of the intense earnestness that the wool-grower at the Antipodes throws into his business. His day often begins at four o'clock a.m., when you may see him mount his sure-footed horse, and accompanied by several intelligent-looking dogs, leave the "head station," as the master's house is called, and not return till sundown. All that time he is busy with his shepherds amongst the sheep upon the "run," or farm, which sometimes extends for miles.

Those wonderful boots that have already carried us to other countries have soon taken us to New Zealand.

See, here we stand on a hill-side, and around us, as far as the eye can reach, the ground is covered with tufts of brown-looking grass, called "tussocks," upon which the sheep are feeding contentedly, or lying out of the sun in the shelter of a patch of unfelled "bush." Happy sheep! they have no thought of that far-away institution the London market, which is always clamouring for tons of tussock-fed mutton and white fleeces.

Weeks have become months, and their peace of mind has not been disturbed by so much as the sight of a man. If they think at all, we suppose they imagine that this happy state of things will continue for ever, and that at any rate the coats which they have taken the trouble to grow they may call their own.

But, alas! all this dreaming suddenly comes to an end. One fine morning they hear the sound of dogs barking and men shouting. It is the first signal that the quiet life amongst the tussocks is to have an end.

The sheep start up and collect together in little groups, with their heads all turned in the direction of the unusual noise, as if determined to make a combined resistance against the disturbance of their quiet. Presently, over the prow of the hill-top appear several dogs, at sight of whom the sheep seem to know by instinct it will be useless to battle, for they turn tail and hurry-skurry off as fast as they can. Then the shepherds, mounted on horseback, come riding along, and shout loud their orders, which the dogs carry out.

How wonderfully the dogs work, understanding every word that is said to them. See how they come helter-skelter down the hill-side, bounding over the tussock grass, making wide circles to collect together the straggling sheep, and mass them all into one big "mob," or flock.

Here and there a sheep becomes obstinate, and will not move. The dog just goes close up and barks at its heels, till it gets up and joins the rest. One sometimes runs off and tries to get into the bush; the dog will then bark in its face till he makes it turn back, and all this without being told.

It is not to be wondered at that the shepherd often loves his dog so that no money would tempt him to sell his faithful companion.

And now the horsemen and their dumb helpers surround the mob, and slowly drive it down into the valley towards the "dip."

You could hardly fancy what a noise two or three thousand able-bodied sheep can make when so minded, bleating so loudly to each other that it becomes impossible to hear your own voice above the din.

What is a "dip"? The dip is the long cemented trough sunk into the ground, fitted with jets of hot water gushing from either side, supplied from large "tanks," or boilers, near at hand. I think that the timid sheep must be terribly frightened, as they are compelled to go through this experience of "scouring," or washing, in order to be made clean; but they are powerless to resist.

Look: at one end of the dip there is a narrow bridge, just wide enough for one sheep to pass, looking like a long box with the lid off. The floor of this bridge, or "race," is greased with fat, and the unfortunate animals driven into it cannot stop themselves, but slide rapidly down, and one by one fall with a splash into the warm water below, where men first seize and rub them with a preparation of soap, and then push them through the dip, with its battery of hot-water spouts.

Here woolly gets a thorough shampooing, which washes out all grease and dirt from his shaggy fleece. He must be very glad when the process is over, and, scrambling out, hurries away

into the green paddock to dry in the hot sun and get ready for his next experience, the scene of which is laid in yonder big wooden building, called the "wool-shed."

Let us walk across the paddock and look at the outside of the shed. See all these little "pens" ranging down one side, each packed with panting, excited sheep. What is going to be done to them? If we come inside we shall soon see.

A number of sunburnt men are lounging about, waiting for the signal to start their day's work. Each has his sleeves rolled up above the elbows, and is armed with a mighty pair of sharp scissors.

You can guess, perhaps, that these men are the "shearers," and the scissors are the "shears."

A whistle is sounded by the "boss," or head man of the shed, and in an instant there is an animated scene. Each man steps out through a little door into his pen, and secures a struggling sheep, which he brings back into the shed, and holding it in position between his knees, his practised hand has in less than four minutes robbed poor woolly of his warm soft jacket, and he is turned back again into the pen with a strange feeling of nakedness. But like a wise animal, he makes very little fuss over his loss, and sets about growing another covering as soon as ever he can.

As for the fleeces, they are spread out in the sun to bleach, till they look as white as drifted snow. Then they are packed, a number together, in one large bale, pressed very tightly by means of machinery, so that they may not take much space on board ship. This process is called "dumping."

The bales are now hurried away to the nearest railway or steamer, that they may be carried to the seaport.

Now, to remove the bales from the shed is no easy task in a country where the roads are only rough tracks, or no tracks at all. A cart with wheels would overturn directly, therefore the wool is packed on to sledges drawn by powerful bullocks, who will drag the heavy load over the roughest ground, encouraged by a driver with a long whip, who expresses himself in language not always polite.

At last we have got our merchandise to the seaport, and you know how it gets to England then. Years ago it always took four months to bring the wool from New Zealand to London, as it was all carried by sailing ships, but now a great deal is sent by steamers, and arrives in six weeks.

The wool has to be very dry before it is put on board, or a terrible thing can, and does sometimes, happen. The damp wool gets hot from being packed so closely, and gradually, after smouldering for days, bursts into flame, destroying the whole ship.

What becomes of the poor sailors? Ah! who can tell of their terrible sufferings? We only know that they left the far colony "all well," and never reaching home, the ship is "supposed to be lost, with all hands."

On arriving at the London Docks, the great bales are despatched with haste to the wool market, where merchants come to buy from all parts of the world.

If you give it a moment's consideration, does it not seem very strange and wonderful to think how the warm blanket that covers you so snugly at night was trotting about, only a few months ago perhaps, upon the back of a sheep feeding on the mountain sides of beautiful New Zealand?

Bronze-faced shepherds have toiled to grow the fleece, brave-hearted sailors have encountered endless perils to bring it home, and active brains have thought out the machine which, worked by skilful hands, weaves it into a blanket, which mother saw in a shop-window and made haste to purchase.

And now, little folk, you and I must say "good-bye" to one another. We have become quite old friends, travelling so many miles and visiting so many strange places in company. With real regret we take off and place away our seven-league boots, that have proved their usefulness by carrying us in safety to explore the wonderful industries of five far-off interesting countries.

Perhaps some day we may put them on again, and do a little further globe-trotting, to satisfy ourselves about the ins and outs of more things that reach dear old England from over the sea.

EDITH A. FINDLAY.

TROT, TODDLES, AND THE TEA-PARTY.

TROT walked slowly upstairs, repeating the words she had heard—

"If you want the entertainment to be a success, you must draw up a programme, and carry it out."

"TODDLES STOOD IN FRONT OF HER" (*p.* 337).

She looked very solemn, for she felt the importance of the occasion. On the day following she and Toddles were to give their very first party, and four little girls and four little boys, not to mention the four dolls of the four little girls, were coming to take tea with Trot and Toddles and mother.

Trot had thought about it a great deal, and so had Toddles, wondering what would happen, and what they should do to make the guests enjoy themselves.

The two children had spent many half-hours talking the matter over, and each time the conversation had ended by Toddles saying—"Well, never mind; there'll be tea." He had found out from cook that there would be two kinds of jam provided for the tea-party, and he felt quite sure that even if there were fourteen little boys and fourteen little girls expected, they would enjoy themselves thoroughly if they had plenty of jam. But Trot did not agree with him, and declared that the question could not be settled that way.

The speech which Trot had overheard suggested all kinds of plans, and she made her way into the nursery to talk over the party once more with Toddles.

Toddles was in the middle of a grand sea-fight. His tin soldiers were sailing about on books on the sea of the nursery floor, and Toddles was firing first at one ship, and then at another, with a large glass marble. Toddles did not wish to be disturbed.

"Toddles," said Trot, "the tea-party is settled at last. If you want the entertainment to be a success, you must draw up a programme, and carry it out."

"Six down at one shot!" cried Toddles; "and the captain among them, too."

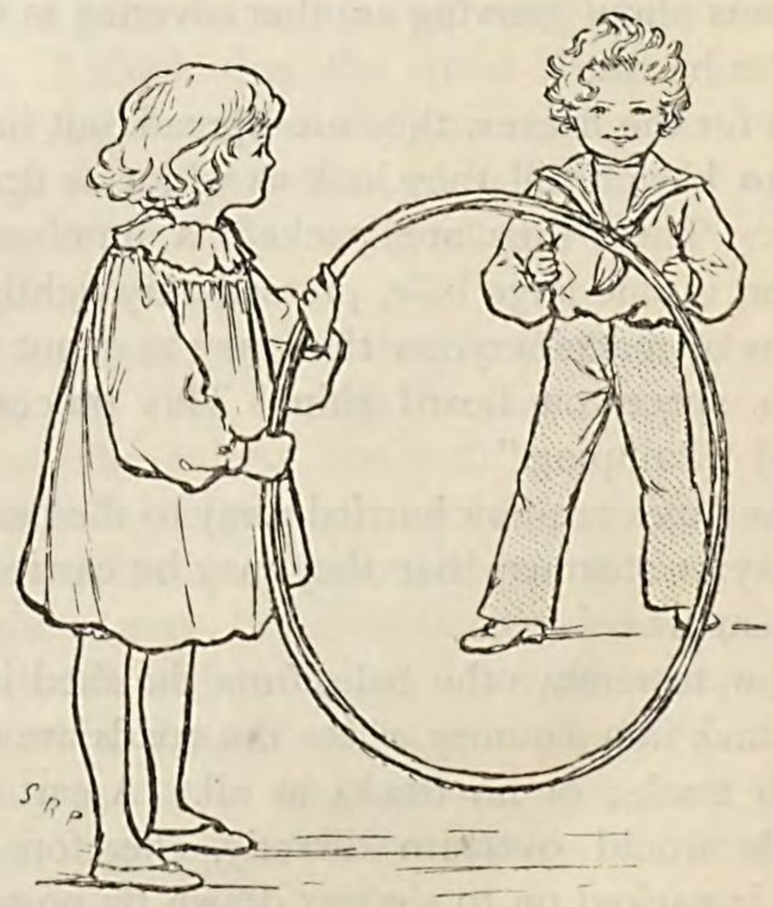
"Toddles," said Trot solemnly, "you do want the entertainment to be a success, don't you?"

Bang! bang! "There'll be tea," cried Toddles.

Trot touched him on the shoulder.

"Do come and talk about the party, Toddles," she said. "I have thought of a new game to play at."

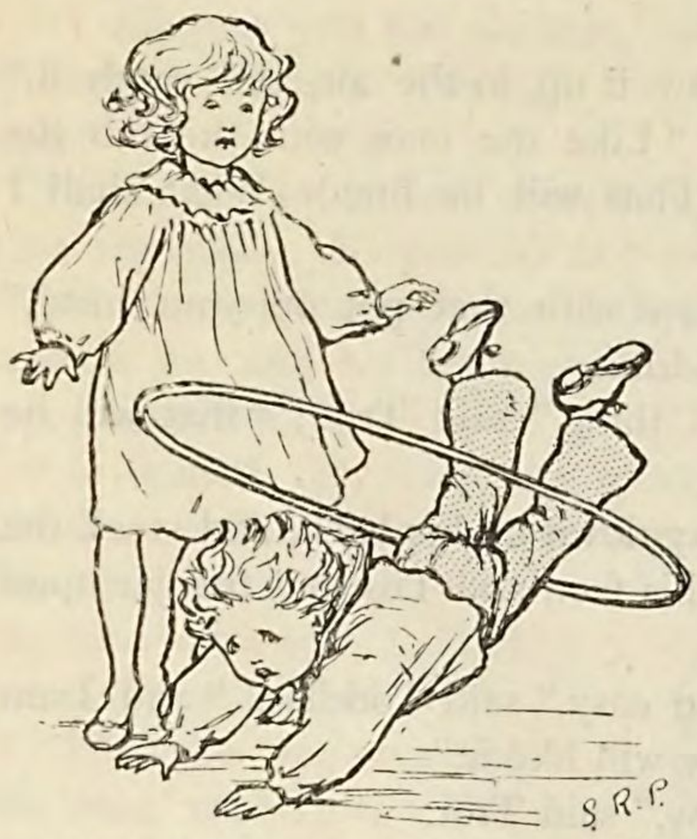
Toddles looked up at last; he was beginning to feel interested. Trot's new games always meant fun, though they sometimes ended in a scolding from nurse.



"'HIGHER!' SHOUTED TODDLES" (*p.* 338).

"What is it?" he asked.

"A circus," answered Trot, with a smile.



"TODDLES FELL DOWN" (*p.* 338).

"No," said Toddles, jumping up from the floor. "Do you really mean it?"

Trot sat down in a chair, and Toddles stood in front of her, and rested his two chubby elbows in her lap.

"We must draw up a programme, and carry it out," said Trot, waving one arm, as she had seen her father do, when he had made the same remark downstairs.

Toddles stared; he felt very much impressed, though he did not know in the least what Trot meant.

"And the circus will be the programme," continued Trot, drawing a dirty crumpled piece of paper out of her pocket. "I will write it down on this. They will come at four o'clock."

"Oh, they'll come before that," objected Toddles. "You put 'Tea at 4' on the letters, and they are sure to come in plenty of time for tea. I should, because of the two kinds of jam, you know."

"Never mind," said Trot; "we can't do anything before tea, so the first thing to put down is 4 TEA;" and she wrote the word in big printing letters.

Toddles watched her silently.

"After tea will come the circus," said Trot. "I wonder how you spell circus?"

"But will mother let us have the circus?" said Toddles. "There won't be room in here for all the horses, and clowns, and ladies we saw the other day."

Trot laughed. "That isn't the kind of circus I mean," she said; "we're to be the circus!"

Toddles looked more astonished than ever.

"We shall ask the party to sit in a circle," said Trot; "and then we shall do things. Perhaps we may as well settle now what to do."

"We must jump through hoops, of course," said Toddles.

"And walk about with things on our heads," said Trot; "balancing, they call it."

"I do wish we could walk on a rope like the man did the other day," said Toddles.

"TROT PUT THE JAR UPON HER HEAD" (*p.* 338).

"We will," said Trot, writing busily.

The spelling was rather a trouble to her; but Toddles quite approved of it, and both children were satisfied with the programme when it was finished, though perhaps anyone else might have found difficulty in understanding it. It looked something like this—

"4 TEA AFTER TEA JUMPING THREW HOOPS BALLUNCING TITE ROPES."

"Won't they be surprised?" said Toddles.

"Now we will practise," said Trot. "As we can't have any horses I will

"THERE WAS . . . A SMASH" (*p.* 338).

hold the hoop, and you shall jump through it."

"That is much too easy," said Toddles.

"'LET US TRY WALKING THE ROPE'" (*p.* 339).

"Couldn't you stand on a chair, and let me jump off another chair through the hoop?"

Trot looked doubtful—"Nurse doesn't like us to stand on the chairs," she said.

She fetched her big wooden hoop and held it up.

"Higher!" shouted Toddles, getting ready to make a spring.

Trot raised the hoop and Toddles jumped; then somehow Toddles and the hoop got mixed up together, and Toddles fell down on the ground.

"Oh dear!" said Trot. "I am sorry; we must try again."

Toddles picked himself up, and rubbed his elbows.

"Don't you think it will look stupid to jump through hoops when we can't ride on horses?" he said. "Of course if we had horses it would be easy enough. I think we had better leave that part out."

"Perhaps we had," said Trot; and she slowly drew her pencil through "JUMPING THREW HOOPS."

"We can both balance things," said Toddles, "I know;" and he jumped up quickly and ran across the room. "I will lie on my back, and put the foot-stool on my feet——"

"And throw it up in the air, and catch it," cried Trot. "Like the man with the tub the other day. That will be fine!—What shall I do?"

"Walk about with that pot on your head," suggested Toddles.

"That old thing," said Trot; "that will be very easy."

Toddles lay down on his back, and stuck the footstool on his feet, and Trot put the jar upon her head.

"It is quite easy," said Toddles, "and I am sure the party will like it."

"Quite easy," said Trot.

There was a sound of something falling, a cry, a little scream, and a smash.

"Oh!" cried Toddles.

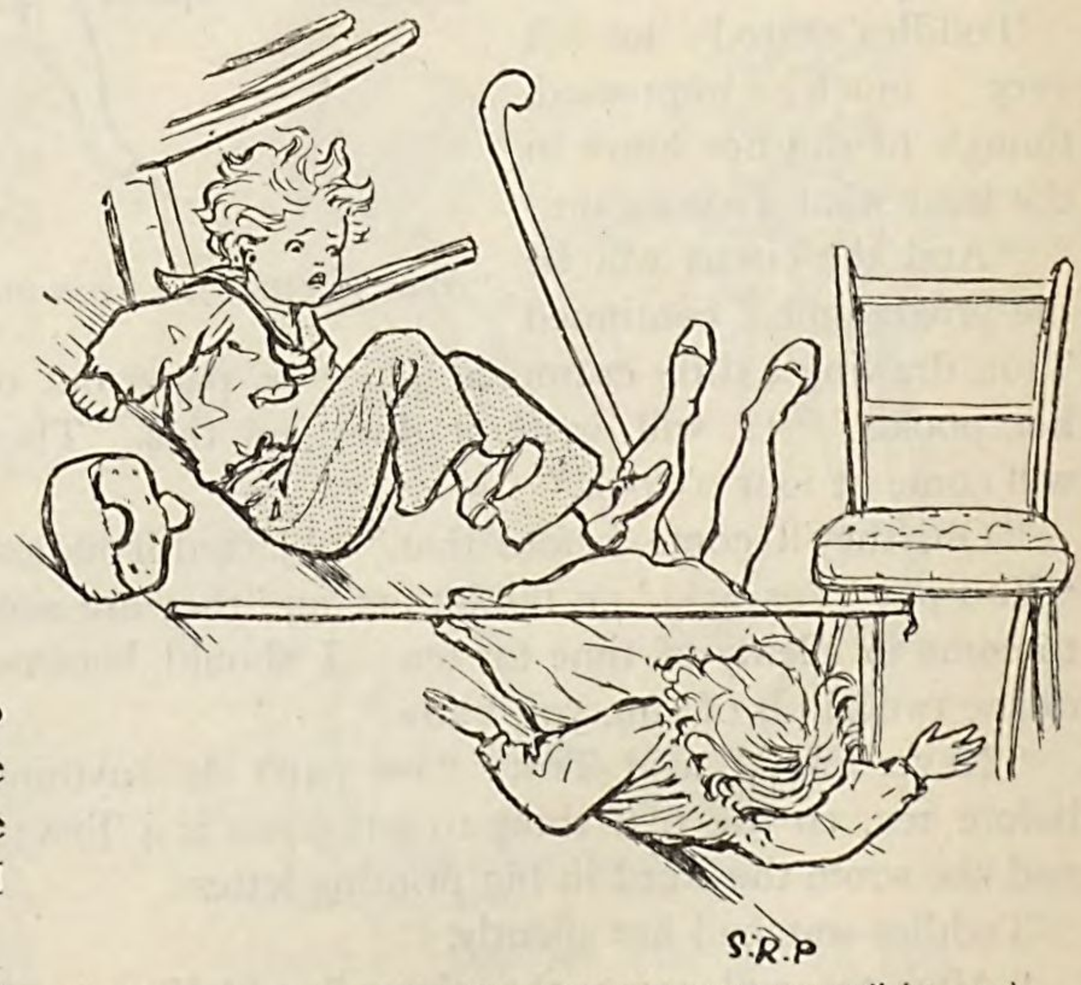
"E—ee—eh!" cried Trot.

"It came right on my nose," said Toddles. "I believe it's broken."

"I'm sure my toe is," said Trot.

There was no doubt at all about the pot, it was very much broken.

"Hush!" said Trot, "there's nurse!"



"THERE WAS A VERY LOUD SCREAM THIS TIME" (*p.* 339).

Toddles stopped in the middle of a scream, and the two children crept on their hands and

knees to the door, and listened eagerly—but it was a false alarm.

"Let us try walking the rope," said Trot.

"I suppose you will do that," said Toddles, rubbing his nose; "though we haven't any rope."

"Then we must find something else," said Trot cheerfully, determined not to be beaten. "I think a walking-stick would do beautifully to practise on, and we'll get nurse to give us a rope to-morrow."

"It looked very easy the other day," said Toddles, as Trot began to arrange one end of the stick on a chair, and the other on a stool; "but I don't expect it is."

"We'll be more careful this time," said Trot. "You hold the walking-stick so that it shan't slip, and I'll hold this long stick so that I shan't slip."

"All right," said Toddles, in a tone of voice which meant that he thought it was all wrong.

There was a loud scream this time—a scream that brought nurse upstairs very quickly, so that she might see what was the matter.

Both the children were on the floor, and sticks, chair, and stool were flying in every direction.

For a minute nurse was doubtful which was Trot, which was Toddles, and which were sticks and chair.

"What are you doing?" said nurse.

But neither of the children answered. Toddles' head felt as if it had suddenly become twice its usual size, and Trot did not feel quite sure where she was, or whether she was standing on her head or her heels.

Nurse picked them up, and kissed them and comforted them, but quite forgot to scold the two miserable little pickles.

They didn't say anything about the circus, and somehow or other Toddles thought he would like to go to bed early; and of course there was no use in Trot staying up by herself, so she went to bed early too.

Next morning the children slept late, and did not seem very eager to get up when they did wake.

"Trot," said Toddles, sighing deeply, "it is the party day. What shall we do about the circus?"

Trot only answered with something between a groan and a growl.

"Children," said mother, coming into the nursery after breakfast, "shall we write to the boys and girls, and tell them to come another day?"

And though you will probably be astonished to hear it, Toddles and Trot nodded their heads and smiled.

"TODDLES AND TROT WERE SITTING SIDE BY SIDE."

"You wouldn't like it not to be a success," said mother.

"Trot," said Toddles, when mother had left the room, "you won't write a programme next time."

"If I do, Toddles," said Trot, "you may carry it out—out of the room, I mean."

But after all there was one part of the programme carried out.

At four o'clock that same afternoon Toddles and Trot were sitting side by side on the nursery floor, looking and feeling very unhappy and miserable.

"If only we hadn't hurt ourselves," said Trot, "we might have been having the party now."

"And the two kinds of jam," said Toddles. "Oh dear! oh dear!"

"Oh dear! oh dear!" said Trot.

The door opened, and nurse came into the room.

"Miss Trot, Master Toddles," said she, "you are to have tea downstairs with mistress to-day."

Toddles and Trot looked surprised; but they jumped up quickly from the floor, forgetting for the moment all their aches and pains.

"Do you think," whispered Toddles to Trot as they walked slowly downstairs, "that there will be two kinds?"

Trot nodded her head. "I hope so," she said.

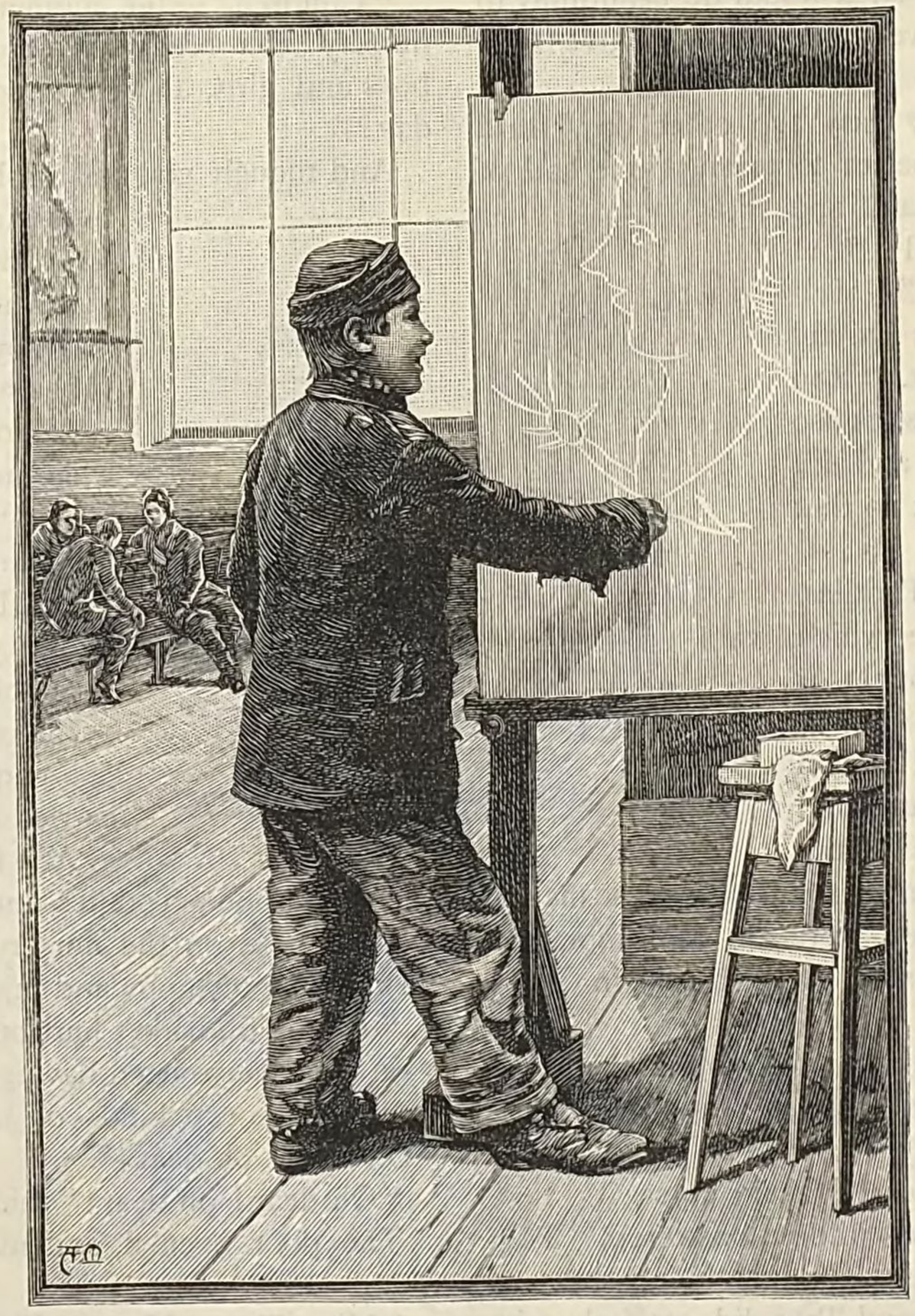
And there were.

MAGGIE BROWNE.

ARTIST BOB.

BOB'S a real artist—
All the boys agree;
None of them exhibit
So much skill as he.

Bob's admiring schoolmates
Like his portraits best,
Though they're not too flattering,
It must be confessed.



"HE CAN FILL A BLACKBOARD."

He can fill a blackboard
With such droll designs,
Full of funny fancy,
In a few swift lines.

Horses, dogs, and donkeys
Come at his command;
Houses, trees, and haystacks
Rise beneath his hand.

For he mostly gives them
Funny heads and faces;
And they're nearly always
Making queer grimaces.

Bobbie's friends feel certain
That on some fine day
He'll surprise the country—
Let us hope he may.

ROBERT RICHARDSON.

THE BISHOP AND HIS CREST.

THERE was once a foreign bishop who had a very pretty crest and motto. The crest comprised two field-fares, and the motto, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?"

One day a gentleman asked the bishop how he came to have such a peculiar coat-of-arms. The bishop replied—

"I will tell you a story first. About fifty years ago a little boy was living in a small village on the banks of the Danube. His parents were very poor, and almost as soon as he could walk the lad had to go into the woods to pick up sticks for firing. When he was old enough, his father taught him how to gather the berries from the juniper bushes, and then to carry them to a man who wanted them for making into gin.

"The little boy went to work in this way day after day, but his road lay past the village school, and he used to linger to watch the master giving lessons. How earnestly he longed to be in that schoolroom, no one knew but himself; but he knew also that his parents had no money to pay for him to be taught.

"One day, as the poor boy was walking sadly along, he met two of the scholars whom he envied setting a bird-trap. 'What are you doing that for?' he asked. 'Master is so fond of field-fares we are going to try to catch one for him.'

"The poor boy saw a gleam of hope at last. He knew that these birds were always flying about the juniper bushes, and he felt sure he could catch some. So the next morning he borrowed a basket from his mother, and had the good fortune to catch two birds. He put them in the basket, and ran to the schoolmaster's house to tell him he had a present for him.

"'A present, my boy,' said the master kindly; 'you do not look as if you could afford to give presents. Tell me what you want for it, and I will pay you and thank you as well.'

"'I would rather give them to you, sir,' replied the boy.

"The master looked at the little fellow as he stood with bare head and feet, and ragged clothes. 'You are a very strange boy,' he said; 'but if you will not take money, you must tell me what I can do for you.'

"The boy fell on his knees. 'Oh, dear kind sir,' he exclaimed, 'teach me to read.'

"The master granted the request; the boy went to him in his spare time, and learnt so quickly that the master told a nobleman who lived in the neighbourhood about his strange pupil. This gentleman sent the boy to a school at Ratisbon; he did well there, and when he rose to wealth and honour he took two field-fares for his coat-of-arms."

"What do you mean?" cried the gentleman.

"I mean," replied the bishop with a smile, "that the poor boy was myself."

THE ADVENTURES OF CRUSTY CHANTICLEER.

"CRUSTY, am I? Well, I'll be crusty here no longer; I'll leave you all, and find a land of my own."

So spoke poor old Chanticleer, who certainly was given to being sour and disagreeable. The rest were always scratching up the finest worms and grubs; the best grains of corn, tossed by the mistress's liberal hand, never fell his way; the sunniest haunts were always the other hens' and cocks', never his; even the coldest and most draughty parts of their roosts were always left for him—now, he was determined he would bear it no longer. Of course, fowls, as well as men and women, girls and boys, can find grievances and vexations, if they look for them, wait for them, and take offence where, perhaps, no offence is meant. Ay, poor old Chanticleer had made himself quite a character, amid his kind in the farmyard, for general disagreeableness; and now he had decided—he would leave them and find a land of his own.

"Find a land of his own—what can he mean?"

"Will he transport himself?" asked the tender-hearted hens.

And the cocks made answer—

"Ay, very like it, it seems—and a good thing too."

Poor old Crusty Chanticleer, transporting himself, a felon almost, from his own kind, because he would not take folk as he found them, and try to make them better by his own sunny life! As for the ducks, when they heard it, they left their pool and came to land, holding up their wings in amazement, because they had no hands.

"Find a land of his own—only fancy!" so they quacked, and came to the hens to talk it over.

Nay, they got up a sort of deputation among them, and sent two of the wisest ducks and two of the wisest hens to remonstrate with the misguided creature. They found poor Crusty Chanticleer in the roosting-place, packing up his few belongings.

"Surely, good sir, you'll think better of it," quacked the first duck.

"Think better of what?" retorted the angry gentleman, going on with his packing.

"Of this mad scheme of yours, this going out to a country of your own," quacked the other duck, motioning to the hens to be silent.

"If I am mad, or my scheme mad either, I have you all to thank for it; but I assure you I am sane, very sane."

"Just so," agreed the first duck mildly; "but we shan't think so if you persist in this—this——"

"This wild goose chase," piped a pert pullet, coming to the front as the other hesitated.

"It's no wild goose chase, nor wild duck's either; I know where I am going," returned the gentleman rudely, and snapped his bag together with a jerk.

His packing was done; he had only to shoulder his bag, take his stick, and depart.

"Do be advised by those who will miss you," pleaded the pitiful hens in concert.

"Miss *me*—I like that; miss and not want me"—there was a great deal of bitterness of spirit in Crusty Chanticleer, considering he was but a barn-door fowl.

"Good-bye!"—he was tramping past them all, a great crowd—they stood to watch his departure, his going to find a land of his own.

"Good-bye!" they cackled after him—"Good riddance!" they muttered under their breath—and then he was outside the gate.

Such a strange creature he looked, tramping along the solitary highway, his shadow beside him, his bag on his shoulder, his staff in his hand; and one and another looked at him as they met and passed him by, but none spoke to him—no, not one."

"Better so," said he to himself; "I'll be friendly with no one, and no one shall be friendly with me; then I shall have a little peace."

Afterwards he turned from the high road, across the fields to the woods, the dark green foliage of the trees standing out against the deep blue sky. It was evening when he reached them, and a solemn hush reigned there. Not that all the world had gone to bed, but the birds had sung their evening hymn and were snug in their nests, while the squirrels and dormice were having a game of "Catch who can" among the tree-branches in high glee; the frogs and toads, ay, the efts and snakes as well, were out for an evening ramble. Still, this mattered not to Chanticleer; he simply walked here and there with a dignified air, looking for suitable lodgings for the night, or, better still, a permanent dwelling. And lo! at last he found the very thing, all unconscious of the many bright little eyes watching him, of the many small creatures nudging each other, and whispering together over this strange being—this *savage*, as they called him, tittering over the word, for they knew not what to name him.

Meanwhile our traveller had reached a fit dwelling-place—a hollow tree, with wide-open door, a scrap of a window, where a knot had fallen out; and there was a projection inside, just like a roosting-place. Our hero put down his bag with a sigh of relief, and made himself at home. That is, he clapped his wings, and crowed, which fairly made the old hollow tree ring again.

"Hark at him!" laughed the merry crew without. "Who is he? What is he?" went from mouth to mouth, answered by a great shaking of waggish heads.

"He must be a species of owl," said a grey-headed old squirrel.

"Do you think old Mr. Noddy Owl sent him here?" asked a know-nothing of a young squirrel.

"No, not he; he's too crusty for that," returned the wise one.

"Well, if he didn't, won't there be a pretty to-do when he comes and finds the other owl in possession?" squeaked a merry dormouse, running up and down the old hollow tree, and catching passing peeps in at the window.

"Ay, I daresay there will," they all agreed; and then, hearing from the dormouse that the object of their conversation had already retired to roost with his head under his wing, they all went home to bed.

This, then, was Chanticleer's "land of his own" —a hollow tree to roost in, the whole wide forest to wander in and find his living. He found it very quiet, very grand—but very strange, and sometimes even lonely, away from all his kind. He missed their ill-usage of the old days, as he termed it; ay, he missed it all—no need to disguise it from himself—still, nobody but himself should know it. And he was not really alone to do as he liked. The squirrels and the dormice were always about him. They ran races round and round his hollow tree; they even mounted up and dashed in at his window and out at his door, in at his door and out at his window, times without number, never letting him sleep a wink, be he ever so drowsy on warm afternoons.

And then the autumn rains came on, and he was moulting—he knew he was moulting—and oh! so miserable. And, before he had half recovered, the frost and the snow were upon the earth—ay, even in the forest the snow came hurling, whirling, and drifting; the grubs and worms disappeared, the berries seemed to be gone. The snow came when the freezing ceased a little, and poor Chanticleer found that the land of his own seeking was a desolate barren land, a land of great hunger and great want. And oh! like a very prodigal fowl, he thought of his home, of his master's house, of the farm-yard with its abundance.

"Oh! why did I leave it, why? Why did they drive me from it?" he cried, one freezingly cold evening, shivering in his hollow tree, his heart as sore and bitter as his moan.

"Please, sir, may I come in and shelter with you?"

It was a robin which piped the request, perched on his window-sill, a wee ruffled bunch of feathers, and peeping in at him.

"No, I want to make no friends, and then I shall have no enemies," was the hard reply.

"No, I don't want to be either, if you don't wish it; I only ask to shelter with you from the cold—you see, I've hurt my wing, and can't fly," replied the meek little bird.

"You may come in, if you like." So, with this scant welcome, wee robin hopped in.

"You come into starvation," said the host, eyeing his guest.

"I came from that," was the response, "and——"

"Well, and what?"

"Oh! nothing, please—cheep, cheep, cheep!" —such a glad little cry gave the robin.

"Well, what is it?" snapped Chanticleer.

"See, here's a great fat worm I've found you —why, I'm bringing you good fortune."

Oh! what a craving was in the hungry robin's bead-like eyes, but he did not attempt to eat it.

"Pooh! 'tis yours; you found it, you eat it."

"Don't you want it?" asked the robin.

"No;" and as he said it a something, half pain, half pleasure, stirred within him; it was his better nature speaking, though he knew it not—he had never done a kind deed before.

"Thank you, thank you, sir." Oh! what satisfied gratitude was in the bird's tone!

"Pooh! it's nothing," snarled Chanticleer, and tucked his head under his wing, to still his hunger if it were possible.

"Why, here's another; you must have that," trilled the robin, just as he was falling into a doze.

So, with a glad cry, he gobbled it up like a fowl in a dream.

"Now I'll sing grace," said the robin; and a thread of thankful melody went winding up through the hollow tree; and then they both slept, and to-morrow was very like the days before, only the robin's chirp, the robin's song, made life a little more bearable for the other.

Days and days they went without food, and then, Robin's wing being a trifle better, he went sometimes on an excursion through the nearest

trees, and brought home a stray berry or two, or a nut, which he shared with his companion, who always flapped his wings and crowed at his home-coming. And so the days went on with frost and snow, until one night Mr. Noddy Owl came home, to find his house occupied by strangers.

"Whoo—whoo—whoo are you?"—pouncing in upon them with a whirr.

"We—we are your humble servants," said Chanticleer, covering the robin with his wing, very like a hen a chick.

"Then turn out; I want no servants."

"I'll go—but let the little one stay till spring; he has a wounded wing not half healed," pleaded Chanticleer meekly—which was true, for the mite had scratched his wing afresh that very morning, and the cock had been bathing it all day, and fanning it with a feather plucked from his own side.

"Oh well, you may both stay. I don't mind, if you are agreeable and let me have my forty winks in peace."

With this, and without more ado, Mr. Noddy Owl drew on his night-cap, and fell to snoring; and all the long night the other two held their very breath, for fear they might arouse the sleeper and so forfeit their home. But ah! the wounded wing of the little bird brought on a feverish attack, and Chanticleer had to be doctor and nurse in one, while the master of the house was so disagreeable and so afraid of infection that Chanticleer had to go down on his very knees and beg for mercy, or he would have turned out both doctor and patient.

"For the love I bear him, let us stay, or he'll die;" so he pleaded one morning, when he thought the poor little robin was just going to die, and he had applied one last painful remedy to try to save the little sufferer.

"Well, if you take up that plea, I'm beaten, for love always masters me; and so it does everybody, if only the world knew it." So hooted the owl, in what he called a whisper.

So they stayed on, and that night came the change, and robin lived; and very soon a change came in the weather, and spring came on, bringing health to wee robin, and—would you believe it?—a longing for his forsaken home to the breast of Chanticleer.

There was a parting after that: Robin flew away to find his mate, Chanticleer packed his bag and took his stick, while Mr. Noddy Owl stood at his door to watch them depart.

"Love knits and love parts," said Chanticleer, with tears in his eyes, wringing a claw of each.

And do you know what they called him in the dear old farmyard?—for he reached it—"Lovy Chanticleer," for he had learned to be the most tender-hearted old creature alive.

A FROG IN THE DOLL'S HOUSE.

"THAT blessed charity!" sighed Mrs. West.

"Oh, granny, I don't think charity has anything to do with putting a frog into my doll's house, and frightening me ever so much," dissented her eight-year-old grand-daughter.

"I think it has, Kitty," returned granny; "charity is said to cover a multitude of sins. If we let Love look through our eyes at the faults of our dear ones, Love will hide them, cover them over, the same as we put a patch over a hole;" and the gentle old lady chose a homely example to make her meaning clear.

"I don't think you know and understand, granny," said Kitty to this.

"I think I do," smiled granny.

Just as if granny had not heard and understood the tempest in a tea-pot—as Nancy, the servant, called it—which had just swept through the house!

The facts were these: when Kitty and wee Dorrie had gone to tidy up the house of the Lady Anne—the Lady Anne sitting near and smilingly watching the proceedings—lo! out sprang a frog as soon as the door was opened.

"Not a big man froggie, but a wee boy froggie," so Dorrie said, standing with Kitty

ALARMED ! (*See p.* 347.)

and granny now, in the honeysuckle-covered porch.

Of course it was Dick, their mischievous elder brother, who put it there; he was always playing them some trick: just for fun, so he said.

What screams rang through the house at froggie's appearance! what running up and down stairs! what laughter from Dick, waiting to hear the "rumpus," as he called it!

At last Nancy captured Master Froggie, and brought him down, a struggling captive, with the tongs. A cruel, wicked woman Dick called her; and granny said, meeting her with it—

"Nancy, frogs feel pain when pinched with tongs, the same as we do. Afraid of it!—then you should have called me."

Now here was Kitty doubting if granny knew and understood about her grievance.

"I'll pay you out!" she had said to Dick, half crying, half laughing. And he had answered—

"Pay away, old lady; a girl's pay is very much like some dogs' barks: worse than their bites. And besides, you're not sure that I did the deed," he added, snapping his fingers at her. "The Lady Anne might have put it there herself—ladies take to strange pets sometimes."

Then he ran upstairs to put on his flannels, and be off to a cricket-match, now that he had seen the end of the tragedy, as he said.

Ah! was it the end?

"I'll pay you out!" said his sister as she awaited him at the foot of the stairs when he came down.

"Pay away!" came back to her, like a laughing echo, as he vaulted out into the sunshine; and then Kitty came to lay her grievance before granny.

"Well, dear, no bones are broken," said peace-loving granny.

"No, but one of the china jars out of the drawing-room is: just a dear little bit of a thing, only large enough to hold a doll's posy, you know—and one that Lady Anne had given her," replied her little grand-daughter.

"Better that, Kitty, than a broken bone or a broken heart; and I've known such things come of 'paying out' and practical jokes. I'm not in favour of either." Granny sighed, and her eyes seemed to be looking away into the sweet long-ago days of her vanished youth.

"Oh! I don't intend to do anything terrible, granny," Kitty assured her.

"Better not do anything at all," granny said.

She did not distinctly forbid Kitty—better perhaps if she had; and yet it may be those small every-day mistakes and actions do more in forming our characters than the great events which seldom come many times in a lifetime.

So away went Kitty to her morning duties of searching for eggs and feeding the poultry—for all this was happening at a farm, where cows were lowing, lambs bleating, the cuckoos crying, and doves cooing in a copse behind the house.

Down in the daisy-dotted paddock, at the back of the yard, was a whole colony of mother hens with their chickens, ducks with their ducklings, and one old mother turkey, that was always gobbling and telling of the doings of her family in an unknown tongue, poking her head so far out of her coop that Dorrie felt half afraid of her.

Well, at last it was near dinner-time, and Kitty had leisure to mount up to Dick's room—to spy out the land, as he would have said. Now Dick's chamber was forbidden territory to anyone; even Nancy made his bed, and so on, as under protest, lest Smut the cat should be allowed an entrance there, and make short work of his pet canary, which hung in the window in its cage—a sweet bower of coolness, shaded by vine-leaves, which crept and twined round the open casement. It greeted the little girl with a chorus of song, as she went in to look for harmless mischief, as she called it—if mischief can be like that—for her hands to do.

Ha! here was his prize picture on an easel by the window, at which he worked every morning from sunrise till breakfast-time, he and his canary enjoying the morning freshness together. She would steal his case of brushes—a whole batch of them there were, all neat, clean, and ready to his hand. She took them and hid them in her room, smiling as she pictured herself to-morrow morning in bed, and deaf to Dick's knocks at the door, when he came in to inquire for his missing brushes. Yes, she smiled over it all: this would lead to no broken bones nor hearts, she told herself, as granny's words came back to her like an echo; but conscience seemed not to have anything to say against her little tit-for-tat joke, except it spoke in granny's echo-words; and in this frame of mind she went singing down to dinner.

The afternoon wore away, tea-time came and passed, then, toward sundown, she and Dorrie went to the paddock to make all the feathered colony snug and safe for the night.

Scarcely were they there when Kitty saw Dick and Fred Laws, his intimate friend, entering at the further gate, their bats on their shoulders, and springing jauntily along, like heroes flushed with victory. Ah! how knowingly his sister smiled and eyed him, and what a wink Dick gave her, as an answer thereto, as he drew near.

"Oh, Kitty, she'll bite me!" cried Dorrie in her baby fear, clinging to her sister as the old turkey poked her head out at her as usual.

"No, she won't bite," laughed Dick, "any more than that little leap-frog did this morning; eh, Dorrie?" pinching the little one's ear playfully.

"How about the paying-out business?" he whispered slyly to Kitty in passing; and then he and Fred Laws went on to the house.

Well, Kitty was not long putting her family to bed, but she had not reached the yard and the back entrance, when out came Dick with white angry face, and the accusing words—

"You wicked revengeful girl! I never thought this of you—that you'd have played me this cruel trick!"

"Thought what of me—what cruel trick?" panted Kitty, fearing she knew not what.

"That you'd have let Smut eat my bird, and all for a joke;" and Dick, in spite of Fred Laws being an eye-witness, burst out into passionate weeping.

"Oh! I didn't—I only hid your brushes for fun," cried the little affrighted maiden.

"But the cat was in the room when we went in to look at the picture," said Fred Laws.

"I don't believe you, Kitty," cried Dick.

"Softly, my boy, softly," spoke granny, coming upon the scene. "Let us go and look at your room."

Yes, there was the bird's cage overturned on the floor, with the door open, the prize picture beside it, which, Fred Laws said, could be touched up and be none the worse. And poor tempted Smut, shut in unknowingly by Kitty, had done this, and had rushed away when the boys entered. It was a doleful scene; but Nancy put her head in at the door with the words—

"Master Dick, the bird is in the lilac-bushes. Bring the cage; I think we can catch it."

And so they did. And this was granny's moral to it all—

"Children, have no more to do with practical jokes. I nearly lost a dear brother's life through one once." And they never did.

A SWING SONG.

SWING low, swing high, swing high, swing low—
Up, up, up to the clouds I go;
And when I am highest it's funny to see
The whole world lying under me.

I can look right over the garden wall,
And see things you can't see here at all;
I can see the church tower under the hill,
And the little school-house, and the old brown mill.

There's a market cart on the high-road now,
And a man behind it driving a cow;
I believe the cart will have cheese and eggs,
And it's such a dear cow with slim white legs.

And when you swing me very high,
And my head seems going to touch the sky,
I can just catch a glimpse of the wide blue sea,
And the white ships on it—one, two, and three.

Up here, as high as the alder-trees,
I soar aloft in the cool fresh breeze;
I can feel it blowing right through my hair,
Coming straight from the blue waves over there.

Swing high, swing low, swing low, swing high—
Down to the ground, and up to the sky;
But I can't swing here for ever, heigho!
And, Geraldine dear, it's your turn now.

King John and his Burial.

John was the meanest king that ever sat on the throne of England, and upon no one did his wickedness and cowardice make a stronger impression than upon himself—at least, when he felt he was going to die. For then the dread of something after death began to haunt him. So he gave orders that his body was to be disguised in a monk's hood and buried between two saints, in the superstitious belief that a man lying in such good company could not be supposed to be a thoroughly bad person; and so it came to pass that he was interred in the Cathedral of Worcester, between the two Saxon saints, Wulfstan and Oswald.

How the Chemist's Cat Lapped Milk.

Necessity is the mother of invention for cats as well as for men, as you shall now hear. A chemist in Chicago had a cat, and it had three kittens. When they were old enough to lap, he used to pour their milk into one of his mortars; but when these three kittens drank together, their three tiny heads just filled the basin, and there was no room for mamma. The fond mother might have pushed her children aside by brute force, had she been so minded; but this she had not the heart to do. So she hit upon a plan for quenching her thirst without disturbing the little ones. Slowly and surely she inserted her paw between two of the kittens until it touched the milk. Then she pulled it back, and licked the milk off, repeating the operation again and again until her wants were satisfied. This habit grew upon her to such an extent that even when the kittens became cats, and left her to set up housekeeping for themselves, and she could lap up her milk at her leisure, she always adopted her new plan of dipping in her paw and licking the milk off.

Where the Swallows Build.

Swallows are very fond of building their nests in houses, mostly under the eaves; but in some countries, as in Greece and the South of France, among the rafters of the roof. This latter is a strange choice, for in many cases they cannot enter or leave the house for their breakfast until the windows or outer doors are opened. Besides, they are much more easily caught by cats that have the run of the house and are always on the prowl; but the young birds often become quite tame and friendly, even allowing the children to stroke them. The Basque folk of sunny France hold different opinions about the swallows, some thinking they bring good, others ill fortune to their dwellings.

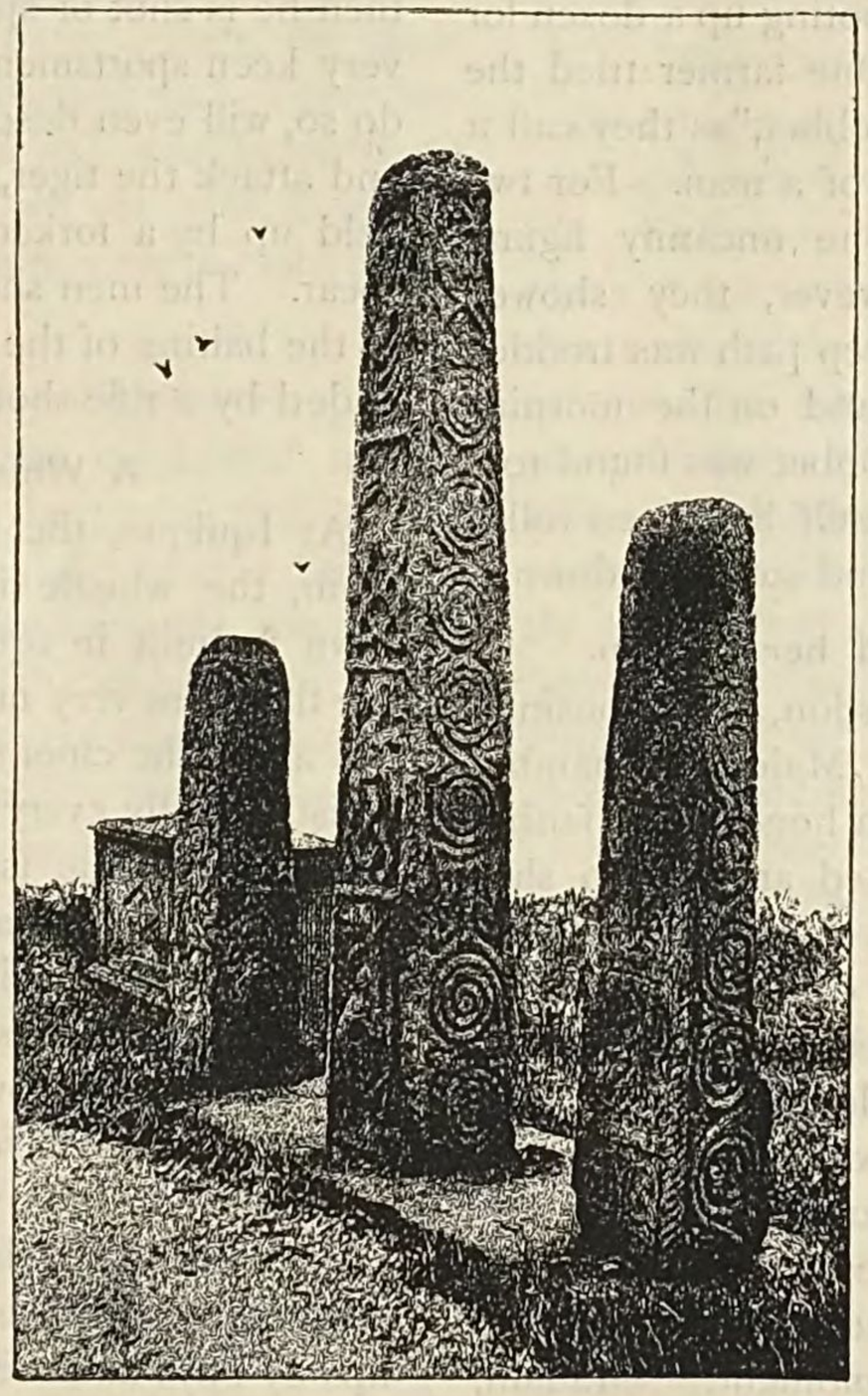
Lost in Central Africa.

Before setting out on his first expedition in Central Africa, Mr. Stanley was presented with a ring, on which was engraved his name, the name of the Expedition, and the date. He wore this ring during his travels in the Lake region, but one day it went a-missing, having either been lost or stolen. Eight years afterwards

Mr. Hughes, a Welsh missionary on the Congo, saw the ring in the possession of a native, and bought it of him, as he had no doubt that it belonged to his distinguished fellow-countryman. When Mr. Hughes returned to England, he sent the ring to Mr. Stanley, who, in thanking him, expressed (as well he might) his great surprise and delight that it should have followed him from the depths of darkest Africa. In view of this strange experience, it can no longer be thought a hopeless task to look for a needle in a haystack.

Seal's Island.

Names of places sometimes contain, very tightly wrapped up, information of a most interesting sort that otherwise might have been lost sight of. Selsey, or Selsea, Bill in Sussex is a case in point. What does the name teach us? It really means Seal's Ey, or Island, the word *ey* being Saxon for *island*. Hence we learn that this spot on the Sussex coast was once the haunt of seals. For it is plain that seals must have constantly resorted to this place in large numbers, before the circumstance impressed itself upon the attention of the people who first began to call the spot by its name of Seal's Island. Yet, but for the fact being preserved in the name, it is very doubtful whether we should ever have known of so interesting a detail in the natural history of the animal.



SAXON CROSSES IN ILKLEY CHURCHYARD.

Old Crosses at Ilkley.

In the parish churchyard of the Yorkshire town of Ilkley, on the river Wharfe, there may be seen three pillars of stone that have an interesting history. Curious figures and mystic knots are carved on the sides of them, which have led to their being considered as crosses erected by our far-away Saxon ancestors. But even before the arrival of the Saxon settlers Ilkley was the seat of still more famous visitors; for within the grassy mounds on the south of the church were encamped a battalion of Roman soldiers, who there raised an altar to Verbeia, the goddess of the Wharfe. This was in the time of the Emperor Septimius Severus, when Ilkley was rebuilt, and became known as the Roman station of Olicana. There is a picture of the quaint old crosses on this page.

The Banks of Newfoundland.

The finest cod-fish in the world are caught on the banks of Newfoundland. These banks have no connection with the shores of the island, from which indeed the nearest is almost a hundred miles distant. They are really great rocky heights rising from the bottom of the sea, and forming submarine table-lands of vast extent. The Great Bank measures 540 miles from north to south, and from east to west it measures in places 300 miles. On this bank the depth of water varies from 50 to 360 feet, but the depth around it is from 10,000 to 15,000 feet. The fishing grounds—or "cod meadow," as they are called—do not cover the whole bank, but are about 200 miles long by 67 broad. Though these have been fished for 400 years, the cod are as plentiful as ever. To the east of the Great Bank lies the Outer or False Bank, where the sea is from 600 to 900 feet deep. The cod caught on the banks are finer and larger than the fish taken off the island or the Labrador coast. This is supposed to be due to the fact that they have reached the age of four years and upwards, at which age their

habits lead them to feed on the banks in preference to the shore, where the younger fish remain all the year.

What Became of the Scarecrow.

The red deer of Exmoor, in Devon, are often a plague to the farmers. Sometimes a herd will destroy two acres of wheat in a single night by rolling themselves about in the growing crop. At other times they will visit a turnip field, biting here and there, and rooting up a dozen for every one that they eat. One farmer tried the effect of a scarecrow, or "bobbet," as they call it in the district, in the shape of a man. For two nights the deer avoided the uncanny figure. On the third night, however, they showed curiosity and pluck, for a deep path was trodden all round the scarecrow; and on the morning after the fourth night the bobbet was found torn into tatters, and the field itself had been rolled on and the crop trampled and smashed down.

Queen Elizabeth and her Cousin.

Henry Cary, Lord Hunsdon, first cousin of Queen Elizabeth, was her Majesty's chamberlain, and proved himself an honest and faithful servant. The queen seemed anxious to show her esteem and regard for him, but with her usual fickleness she did not carry out her wishes until it was too late. Three times she granted him the honour of an earldom, but each time she withdrew it. At last, when he was lying on his death-bed, Elizabeth came to see him, and placed the patent and robes on his bed. The baron, however, showed unwonted spirit and dignity even at that trying moment. "Madam," he said, "since you counted me unworthy of the honour whilst I was living, I count myself not worthy of it now I am dying."

Tiger-baiting in Manipur.

Several months ago the name of Manipur, a State to the north of Upper Burma, was prominent in connection with a disaster—shortly afterwards brilliantly avenged—to the British arms. The country is visited occasionally by tigers, which were once numerous until a plan was adopted for hunting them down whenever they appeared. For this purpose the people are divided into groups, and as soon as a tiger was known to be skulking in the district of any one group, it was the duty of the head man to report the fact to the Rajah of Manipur, whereupon orders were given to have the jungle where the animal was hiding surrounded with stout nets. Outside of these very strong fences of bamboo were erected, on the top of which seats were put up for the use of spectators, among whom the rajah and his court might sometimes be seen. Everything being now ready, the tiger is driven from his lair by lighted brands, and then he is shot or speared. The Manipuris are very keen sportsmen, and, though forbidden to do so, will even descend into the enclosed space and attack the tiger, carrying in one hand a net held up by a forked stick, and in the other a spear. The men show great coolness and pluck in the baiting of the victim, whose life is usually ended by a rifle-shot.

A Whistling Seaport.

At Iquique, the richest and busiest port of Chili, the whistle is hardly ever silent. The town is built in square blocks, and cross-roads are therefore very numerous. Now, as tramcars run along the chief streets, and the driver has to whistle loudly every time he comes near a cross-road, the whistle is seldom out of his mouth. In the bay steam-launches whistle all day long as they thread their way among the shipping; and railway engines shriek continually as they pass through the town. Then at night, after the tramcar-drivers have gone to roost, the policeman takes up their wondrous tale and raises the echoes with his whistle-calls. To these displays must be added the many performances on human lips by boys and men.

Adventures of a Young Cow.

There is at least one farmer in the United States who knows how vicious a young cow can be when she likes. She broke loose from her stall one night in autumn, and wandered into the hills. Three times her owner hunted her, but when he got near enough to throw his lasso at her, the heifer charged him so furiously that he was glad to seek safety in flight. The creature grew so fierce that a man was hired to run her down and shoot her. Once he managed to send three bullets into her, but they were far too small to do any harm beyond angering her, for she gave chase to him and almost gored him twice before he escaped. During the winter she

broke into a store-cellar and ate up a pound's-worth of turnips and cabbages. Not having the common courtesy to close the cellar door after her meal, the frost destroyed five pounds'-worth more of the roots. After this event nets were spread for her, but whenever she became entangled she managed to bolt to the woods with the nets dangling about her like spoils of war. Her career came to an end at last. She was now being closely watched, and in an evil moment she ventured to enter a barn, the door of which was promptly banged to. There she was fated to remain until she was fattened up for the butcher. Thus we see that it is not always wise to allow a young cow to taste of the sweets of liberty.

Pity for the Poor Professor.

Dr. Robert Simson, the celebrated mathematician, who flourished during the first half of the eighteenth century, and whose edition of Euclid is still used in many schools, was a very absent-minded man, and the object of frequent practical jokes. On one occasion a porter of Glasgow University, in which Simson held the chair of Mathematics, dressed himself up for the part, and, calling on the Professor, begged charity of him. In reply to several questions the man gave an account of himself that closely resembled (as, of course, it was meant to do) Simson's own history. Struck by the extraordinary likeness between his visitor's career and his own, he asked the former what his name was. On being told that it was "Robert Simson," the Professor remarked with deep interest, "Why, it must be myself," and handed the poor professor a substantial gratuity, adding a few words of pity for his sad fate as a man of genius.

They Knew the Keeper.

The cleverness of dogs is an old subject, but it is always receiving some new illustration. Not long ago a man was summoned at a London police court for allowing his two dogs to go about unmuzzled in Hyde Park. When one of the park-keepers called his attention to the fact, the man ran into the street, and so got out of the keeper's power. When the latter was asked why he did not catch the dogs, he said he might as well try to catch a flash of lightning, for they vanished the moment they saw the uniform of a policeman or a park-keeper. Being further asked how one of the dogs was marked, he replied that neither he nor any other keeper had ever got near enough to know that. As soon as a keeper appeared, the owner went one way and the dogs another, and all three met outside the gates. The witness did not add that then they fell a-laughing; but it is pretty plain that this is what they must have done.

The Cat and the Deaf Servant.

One night as a lady was going home in the cold and wet the faint cry of a cat caught her ear. Calling to the animal in a friendly tone, pussy at last followed her to her house, where it was soon made warm and comfortable. The cat became very fond of a deaf and dumb servant employed in the house, who treated it with great kindness. Pussy was able to be of some use to the good-hearted woman. When the servant was alone and a knock came to the door, it was the cat that told her of the fact, by jumping off her lap (where she generally lay) and then looking up into her face. After the knock had been answered and the servant had returned to the kitchen, pussy again climbed into her lap.

The "Blind Clerk" of the Post Office.

In the New York Post Office there is an official who is called the "blind clerk." His business is to decipher bad writing and to guess at the right direction of a wrongly-addressed letter. Through his skill nine-tenths of the thousands of "blind" letters received at the Post Office every year arrive at their proper destination. These letters are, of course, addressed in all languages, so that this clerk must be a good linguist. One letter was addressed in three languages—the name of the person for whom it was intended was in German, the name of the state was in French, and the "United States of America" was added in English. Though the name of the person was incorrect, and the State was New Jersey instead of New York, the letter at last reached its journey's end. The name of "blind clerk" is misleading, however. As we have seen, he has all his wits about him. It is the letters that cannot see their way home, and are therefore "blind."

PAGES FOR VERY LITTLE FOLK.

SURPRISING ROVER.

I'M in Rover's kennel:
Won't the doggie stare
When he comes and finds me
Snugly seated there?

Hullo! Mr. Rover,
I'm sure that I should do
For a trusty watch-dog
Just as well as you.

See, I poke my head out,
Growl and bark—bow-wow:
Wouldn't thieves be frightened
If they saw me now?

Still, it would be tiresome,
Barking all the day:
Take your kennel, Rover;
I am off to play.

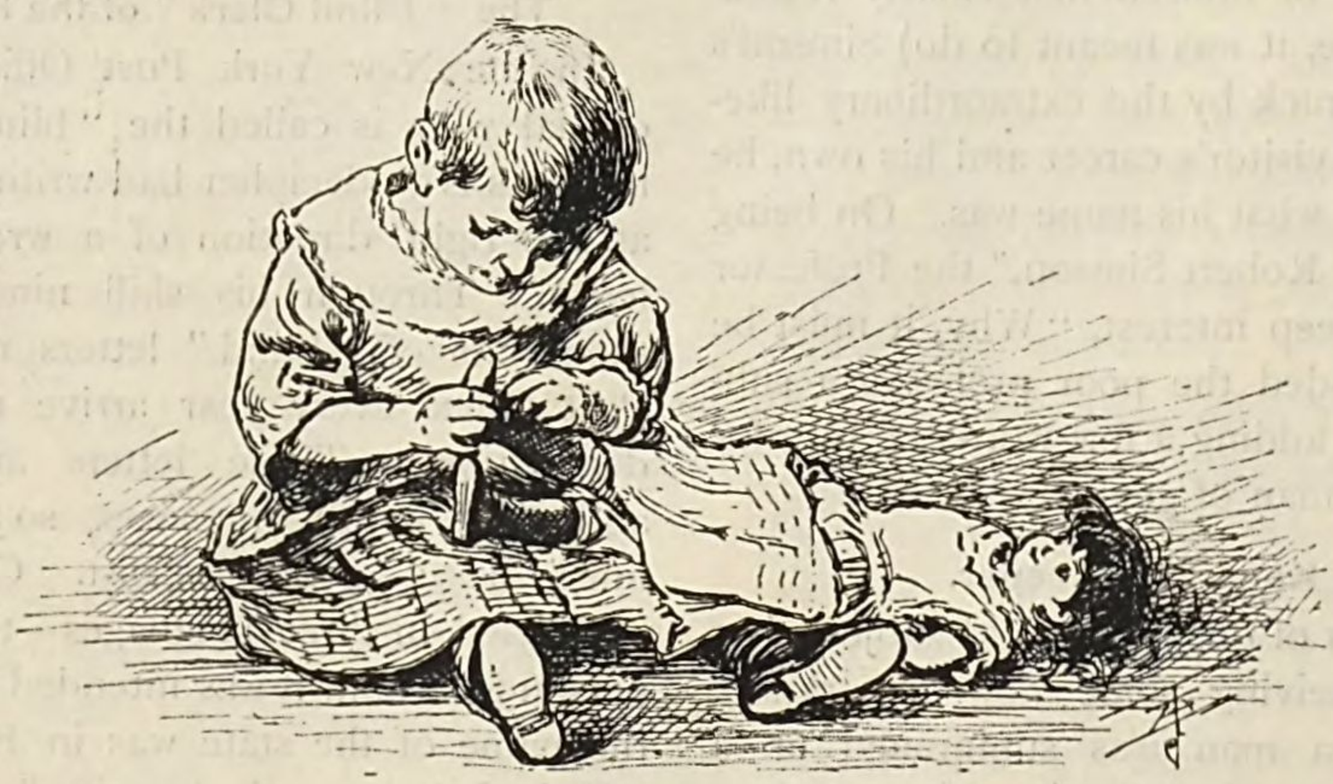
IN MIS-CHIEF.

"I SHALL not be a-way more than five min-utes," said nurse to Tom-my; "and here are some new pic-tures to look at whilst I am a-way."

But as soon as she had gone Tom-my jump-ed off the chair, and look-ing out of the nurs-er-y door, saw that the door of the play-room was o-pen.

Now, Tom-my was not al-low-ed to go in-to the play-room by him-self, but he felt ver-y naugh-ty to-day, and he went quick-ly to the play-room, walk-ed in, and look-ed round.

The first thing that he saw was his broth-er Jack's new kite. And Tom-my, see-ing a sharp pen-cil ly-ing on the ta-ble, be-gan to punch holes in it. He next saw a box of lead-en sol-diers, which he threw on the floor, and then broke off their guns and their swords.



"'I WILL PULL OFF THE BUTTONS'" (*p.* 353).

He was much pleas-ed with what he had done, and look-ed round to see what else he could do. A-las! he saw Sis-sy's new wax doll ly-ing in a cra-dle.

"Tom-my likes to poke out the doll's eyes," said he; but, hap-pi-ly, be-fore he pok-ed at dol-ly's eyes, he no-tic-ed that one of her shoes was un-fas-ten-ed.

IN ROVER'S KENNEL. (*See p.* 352.)

"I will pull off the but-tons," said Tom-my. And he be-gan to pull at them with all his might.

Just then the door o-pen-ed, and nurse came in.

"Oh, Mas-ter Tom-my!" said she, "what have you been do-ing?"

"Kite. sol-diers, doll!" said Tom-my. "Tom-my is glad!"

"Glad a-bout what?" said nurse, look-ing round: "glad when you ought to be sor-ry for do-ing so much mis-chief, you naugh-ty boy!"

She took a-way the doll, and pick-ed up the sol-diers.

"Oh dear! what will Mas-ter Jack say? And you've spoil-ed his kite too!"

And nurse took Tom-my out of the play-room, and made him sit in a cor-ner of the room quite still for half-an-hour.

J. G.

WHAT COULD LIZ-ZY DO?

LIZ-ZY did not know what she should do. In the sum-mer she had help-ed to gath-er the straw-ber-ries, and cur-rants, and rasp-ber-ries; and aft-er that she had play-ed in the great corn-field, and pick-ed up the ears of wheat that were left aft-er the men had made the sheaves.

"SHE SAT ON A STOOL" (*p.* 355).

"Oh dear!" said Liz-zy to her moth-er, "how soon the sum-mer goes by! The days are be-gin-ning to get quite short."

"Well, my dear," said her moth-er, "au-tumn is ver-y pleas-ant, and the fruit in the or-chard is be-gin-ning to get ripe. There are the ap-ples, and the pears, and the plums, and the dam-sons to get in, and you can watch the men gath-er-ing them."

So Liz-zy went to the or-chard ev-er-y day to watch the fruit get-ting rip-er and rip-er; and when it was quite ripe Liz-zy saw it all car-ri-ed a-way, and the trees look-ed quite bare. Then the leaves be-gan to get yel-low and red, and to fall on the ground. Ver-y soon the air be-gan to get quite cold, and the rain came down in a mist-y man-ner, and peo-ple said—

"It is real No-vem-ber weath-er."

Then Liz-zy was ver-y much dis-tress-ed.

"I can do no-thing now," she said.

"Oh yes," said her moth-er; "you have man-y toys to play with, and man-y books to read, and a nice warm fire to sit by, so you must make your-self hap-py in the house whilst this gloom-y weath-er lasts."

But still this did not con-tent Liz-zy.

"It is so dull to stay in the house all the time," she said.

"The weath-er is not pleas-ant," said her moth-er.

"I know that," said Liz-zy, "but I have a warm coat and thick boots, and it does not rain much now; and I could take an um-brel-la. On-ly I have no-where to go; for the hay-mak-ing, and the har-vest, and the fruit-get-ting are all at an end. Can't you think of some-thing for me, moth-er?"

Her moth-er thought for a mo-ment.

"Yes," she said; "I will tell you what you shall do. You know that Mrs. Brown's lit-tle girl has been ver-y ill, and now that she is get-ting bet-ter she needs plen-ty of good food. Now I want to send her some soup, and some eggs, and some oth-er things this aft-er-noon.

"Do you think you can car-ry them to her? Cook shall pack them up in a bask-et for you."

"Oh, that will be ver-y nice!" said Liz-zy. "I can car-ry the bask-et quite well. And if it is heav-y, I shall think that I am do-ing good, and I shall say to my-self, 'Won't Su-sy Brown be glad to have the soup?'"

Mrs. Brown and Su-sy were so pleas-ed to see her, and Liz-zy stay-ed to talk to them, and had the pleas-ure of see-ing Su-sy as she sat on a stool and en-joy-ed some soup.

"Oh, thank you, Miss Liz-zy," she said; "how good of you to bring it for me!"

J. G.

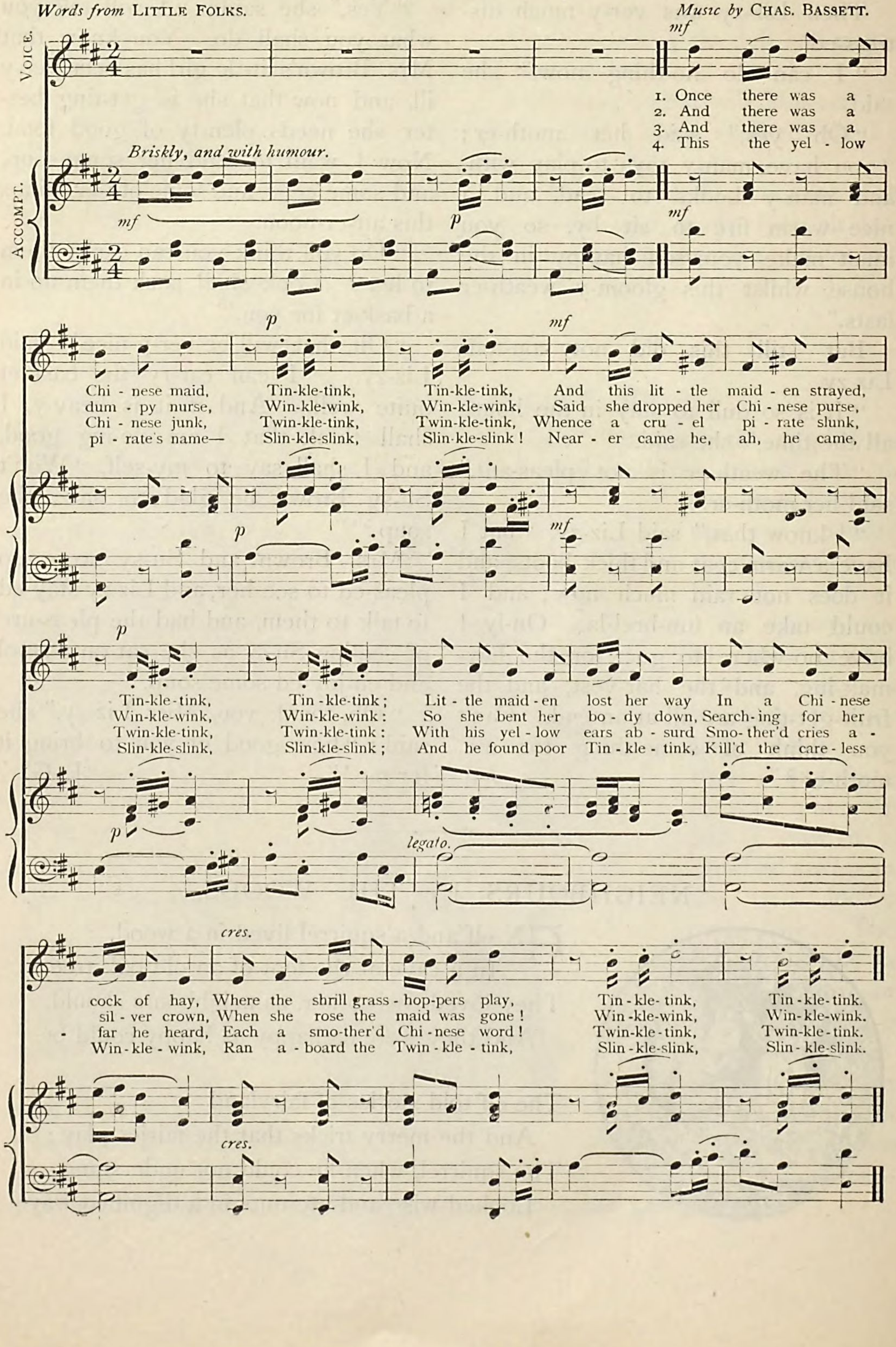
NEIGHBOURS IN THE WOODS.

AN elf and a squirrel lived in a wood,
In a cave at the foot of an old oak-tree;
They loved each other, as neighbours should,
And they were as happy as happy could be.

The elf told stories of fairyland
And the merry tricks that the fairies play;
The squirrel, when he could not understand,
Looked wise and ate nuts in a dignified way.

TINKLE-TINK.

Words from LITTLE FOLKS. *Music by* CHAS. BASSETT.



OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES.

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

WHEN the missing letters have been supplied, the whole will form a verse from a poem by Longfellow.

"L×v×s×f×r×a×m×n×l×r×m×n×u×
W×c×n×a×e×u×l×v×s×u×l×m×,
A×d,×e×a×t×n×,l×a×e×e×i×d×s
×o×t×r×n×s×n×h×s×n×s×f×i×e."

VERA MALAFEEFF.
(Aged 11¼.)
Estometchee, Luga, Russia.

MENTAL HISTORICAL SCENE.

I SEE a king fighting desperately against his enemies: the tide of battle seems turning against him when he calls out, "If God gives me this battle, I will believe in Him and become a Christian." He won the battle, and kept his promise by being baptised.

Who was the king? against whom was he fighting? and what was the name of the battle?

ETHEL SPENCE.
(Aged 16.)
Waldron,
Plaistow Lane,
Bromley, Kent.

BURIED NAMES OF RIVERS.

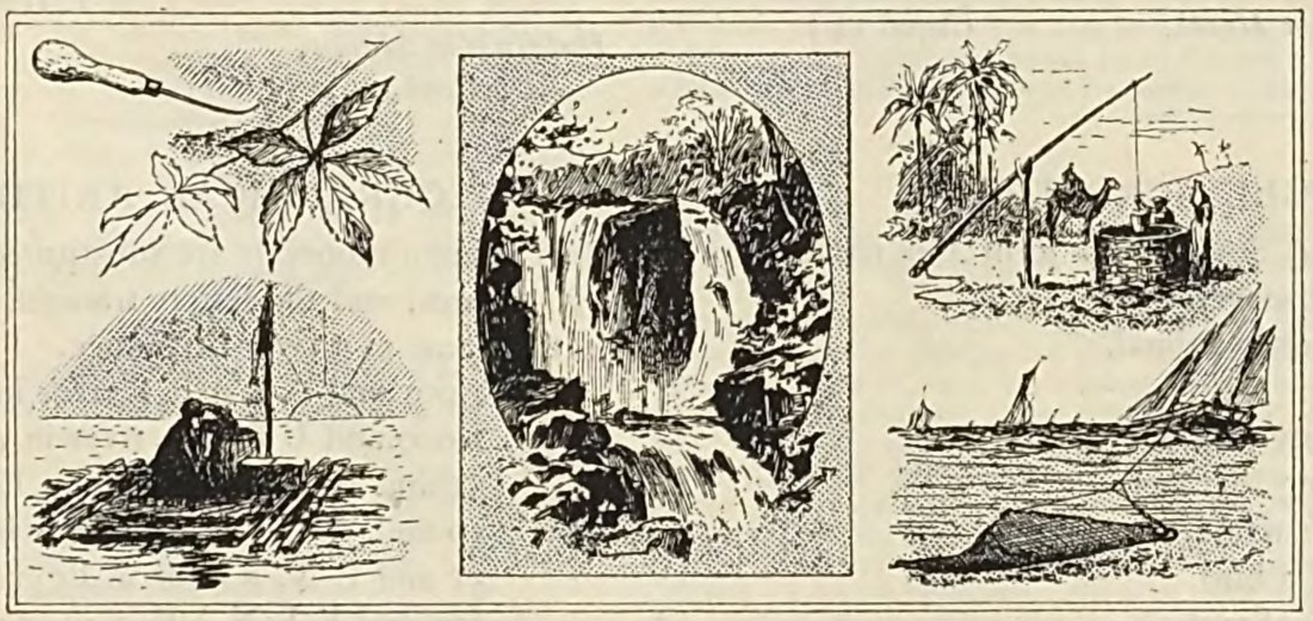
THERE are pike and eels in our river.
Kate escaped from the fire.
John went with Amy.
Helen enjoyed the ball.
Who did you send to the farm?

ISABEL M. GOLDSMITH.
(Aged 11½.)
Bardwell Hall, Ixworth.

HIDDEN PROVERBS.

1. DLLWAEAWEREPGSOIC.
2. GSNAHTMSLNGLTOEOO SRNRIESAO.

MAUD PERRY.
(Aged 10¾.)
Hughenden,
Stamford Hill, London, N.



PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

From the letters contained in the name of the central object form the names of the surrounding ones.

WORD SQUARE.

MY first and my second are animals. My third is a refreshing beverage.

ISABEL M. H. SLADE.
(Aged 15.)
20, *Dealtry Road, Putney.*

DOUBLE VERB ACROSTIC.

MY initials and finals read downwards will form two words meaning "to choose," and "to fight for."

1. Spoken. 2. To raise. 3. To idle. 4. To overlook or forgive. 5. To hold. 6. To trample upon.

MYRTLE F. H. FRASER.
(Aged 12½.)
The White Lodge,
Parkstone, Dorset.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

MY whole is a flower.
My 1, 7, 9 is a noise.
My 6, 5, 2, 1 is to guide.
My 3, 5, 4 is a boy's name.
My 6, 7, 1 is a covering.
My 2, 7, 4 is help.

ALICE P. WHITTALL.
(Aged 12.)
Heald Lawn, Bowdon,
Cheshire.

CHARADES.

MY first is a useful structure.
My second is found in roads.
My whole is used in grinding corn.

My first is a very small article.
My second is placed on a seat.
My whole is where you put my first.

PERCY ALLARD.
(Aged 12¾.)
Normandy Villa, Wilton Road
Great Ilford, Essex.

SCOTTISH TOWNS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

A BOY'S name; part of the human body.
A hard mineral substance; a shelter.
A parent; a spring.
A vehicle; part of a house.
To move about; a sea-fish.

GWYNEDD M. HUDSON.
(Aged 10.)
110, *Hurlingham Road,*
Fulham, S.W.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A VOWEL.
A small cake.
A girl's name.

A bird.
A continent.
A town in Palestine.
A fruit.
An edge.
A vowel.

GERALDINE GLENCROSS.
(Aged 12.)

Morval Vicarage, Sandplace, R.S.O. Cornwall.

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

MY firsts are in increase, but not in more.
My seconds are in patch, but not in wore.
My thirds are in admirals, but not in rope.
My fourths are in ailment, but not in mope.
My fifths are in navy, but not in ship.
My wholes are the names of countries three;
And can you tell me my riddle-me-ree?

HILDA MARTYN.
(Aged 14.)

The Limes, Thornton Heath, Surrey.

SINGLE ACROSTIC.

MY initials read downwards form the name of a celebrated discoverer.

A domestic animal.
A fruit.
A county of England.
To bring together.
A girl's name.
Part of a bird.
A kind of vase.
A coin.

VIOLET FRERE.
(Aged 13¼.)

The Camels, Wimbledon Park.

METAGRAM.

I AM a strong rope.
Change my first letter and I am a story.
Again, and I am an end of a house.
Again, and I become an animal.
Again, and I am a piece of furniture.

JEANIE T. BREBNER.
(Aged 13.)

2, *Scottswood Terrace, Dundee, N.B.*

HIDDEN NAMES OF GIRLS.

1. YES, he lent it to John.
2. Have they skated? I thought the ice was not thick enough.
3. No, I daresay James had it.
4. The sick cat is going to live, I think.
5. The cart wheel went into a rut, Horace.
6. Clean this pan, Sybil, at once.

EDITH C. GIBBONS.
(Aged 13¾.)

Boddington Manor, Cheltenham.

GEOGRAPHICAL ARITHMOREM.

IF Roman numerals are substituted for the following figures, and the letters transposed, the initials will give the name of a river in France.

1,001 and A G A B, a river in Africa.
1,000 and U R A, a river in Asia.
51 and B R E B, a river in England.
50 and W O R E L, a river in England.
51 and E N, a river in Egypt.
100 and K R N A E, a river in Germany.
50 and E B E, a river in Germany.

IRENE WEAR.
(Aged 14¼.)

Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

ANSWERS TO OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES (*p.* 285).

RIDDLE-ME-REE.—DUBLIN.

METAGRAM.

Fill. Bill. Kill. Will. Hill. Pill. Rill. Till. Gill.

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

"A little fairy comes at night,
Her eyes are blue, her hair is brown,
With silver spots upon her wings,
And from the moon she flutters down."

HIDDEN PROVERB.

"A miss is as good as a mile."

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Rain. Tent. Dee. Dean. Aire. Rim.

BURIED NAMES OF GIRLS.

1. Amy. 2. May. 3. Ellen. 4. Bertha. 5. Ella.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

LONDON.

1. **L** amb. 2. **O** pening. 3. **N** ile. 4. **D** owns. 5. **O** range. 6. **N** arcissus.

ARITHMOREM.

COWPER.

W alter. **R** aven. **O** unce. **P** uma. **C** oax. **E** el.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

NAPIER—ABYSSINIA.

Brookside, Catterick, Yorkshire.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I am going to tell you about the wonderful sagacity of a dog. I used to have a little terrier called Prince, which I frequently took out with me in a leash. One day, when I was accompanied by my cousin and her collie Rough, Prince managed to break loose from me, and ran away to chase some sheep at the other end of the field. My cousin called Rough and told her to bring Prince back; she immediately set off running in the direction taken by the terrier, and returned soon after with the delinquent, having forced him to accompany her by holding the end of the leash in her mouth. When she reached us she allowed me to take Prince from her. Don't you think Rough is a very clever dog? I do. HENRIETTA HUTCHINSON (Aged 13).

Calcadæ do Galvao, Lisbon, Portugal.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—There is here an old Convent called "The Royal Convent of Santos," where there is a feast every year. They have a procession inside the Convent, where ladies and children of high rank carry lighted candles, accompanying the procession. Afterwards there is a Bazaar, where several of the ladies sell nice things, and children go about selling flowers and cakes. All these things are for the poor, and a great amusement for us.

EMMA BANDEIRA (Aged 11).

Belle Vue, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I am going to tell you a tale about a chicken that we had a year or two ago. This chicken was hatched with a ring of feathers round its neck, and my mother, who always took care of our fowls, called all of us to look at it, except my father, who was staying in London. We gave it the name of "Good Queen Elizabeth" directly we saw it. When mother went the next morning to feed the chickens again, she could not find it anywhere, so we supposed the old hen had pulled its feathers out, because she did not like to see one chicken different from the rest, for my mother had counted them, and there was still the same number. ALICE M. CATON (Aged 15).

Kanie, Poste Rejowiec, Kolej, Nadwislanska, Poland.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—It is the first time I am writing to you. I want to say how much I like LITTLE FOLKS. We have a large pond here which we call the Atlantic Ocean, and in the middle of which there is an island, and we name it "Atlanta." There is a cottage on it, like those in which our peasants live, and which one of my brothers helped to build. In it there are two rooms: one has a brick fire-place, and often we make bread and cook potatoes there; then we ask everyone to come over in the boat and have "goûter" with us. We grow all sorts of vegetables, and when they are ready we sell them to our mother, and with the money she gives us for them we buy things for our island. We like our island, Atlanta, very much and we spend most of our playtime on it in the summer.

ELZBIETKA WORONIECKA (Aged 9½).

Ilfracombe College, Ilfracombe.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I went to South Wales this year, and fine fun we had. I saw a man put a poker and a sword down his throat. The people threw pennies and halfpennies to him, and then I came away because my aunt came. It is a nice place, but London is better, because it is larger. I went to London last year, and saw a strike. The road was quite full, not any room to pass, and my father went into the crowd and got knocked about. I saw the police in a row, all ready. When the men saw their chief, they took off their hats and waved them to him and shouted. Afterwards, when we were at tea, I saw four policemen riding up the Vauxhall station way. I have seen a policeman's car; it is very funny. A policeman stands behind, and one drives. Perhaps you would like to hear about our cat and kitten. The cat can make a noise like knocking at the door. She does it by lifting up the mat and letting it drop again, when she wants us to let her come in. The kitten plays with its tail, and follows its mother wherever she goes.

J. REES (Aged 9¾).

Crickleaze, Chard.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Five years ago, when we were in India, our sweeper brought me a little unfledged parrot, or rather parroquet, three days old. I hadn't the least idea what to do with him, but I succeeded in rearing him. He is now very handsome, and is quite hardened to the changes of the English climate. He performs several little tricks, such as "dying for his country," "walking up stairs," on our fingers, going through rolled up papers as tunnels, etc. He is very tame and loving. He is much fonder of gentlemen than ladies, and will always fly to a gentleman. He cannot talk, but whistles very nicely indeed. I always take him travelling with me, and he does not mind it at all. In fact, he is very fond of having a few porters, etc., to admire him, and shows off with great delight. I am sorry to say he is a dreadful coward, and is quite of the opinion that "discretion is the better part of valour." We have taken in LITTLE FOLKS for some time now, and like it very much indeed. LETTICE ILBERT (Aged 16).

55, *Church Street, Kingston, Jamaica.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I live in Jamaica. Our Exhibition has been over for some time, and Kingston is very dull without it. It was a great success, and I enjoyed myself very much going to it. In the poultry yard of this house we have a lot of fowls. One hen had a chicken, and she threw it off, and another hen took care of it; but she died, and so the chicken was left without a mother. A cock is now minding it. It follows him everywhere, and he calls it to feed. I have been taking LITTLE FOLKS in for a long time, and I like the stories very much. My favourite one in this year's volume is "A Pair of Pickles."

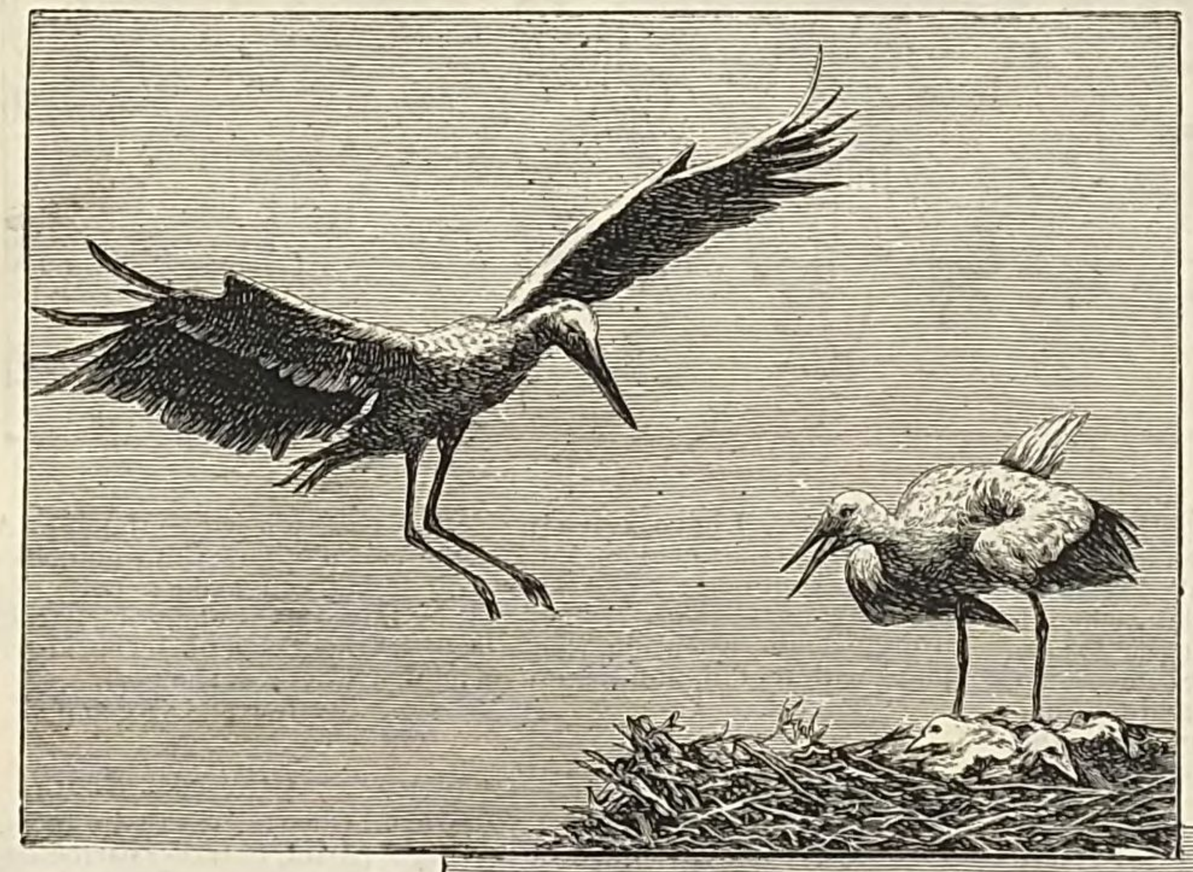
MARIE L. DA COSTA (Aged 12).

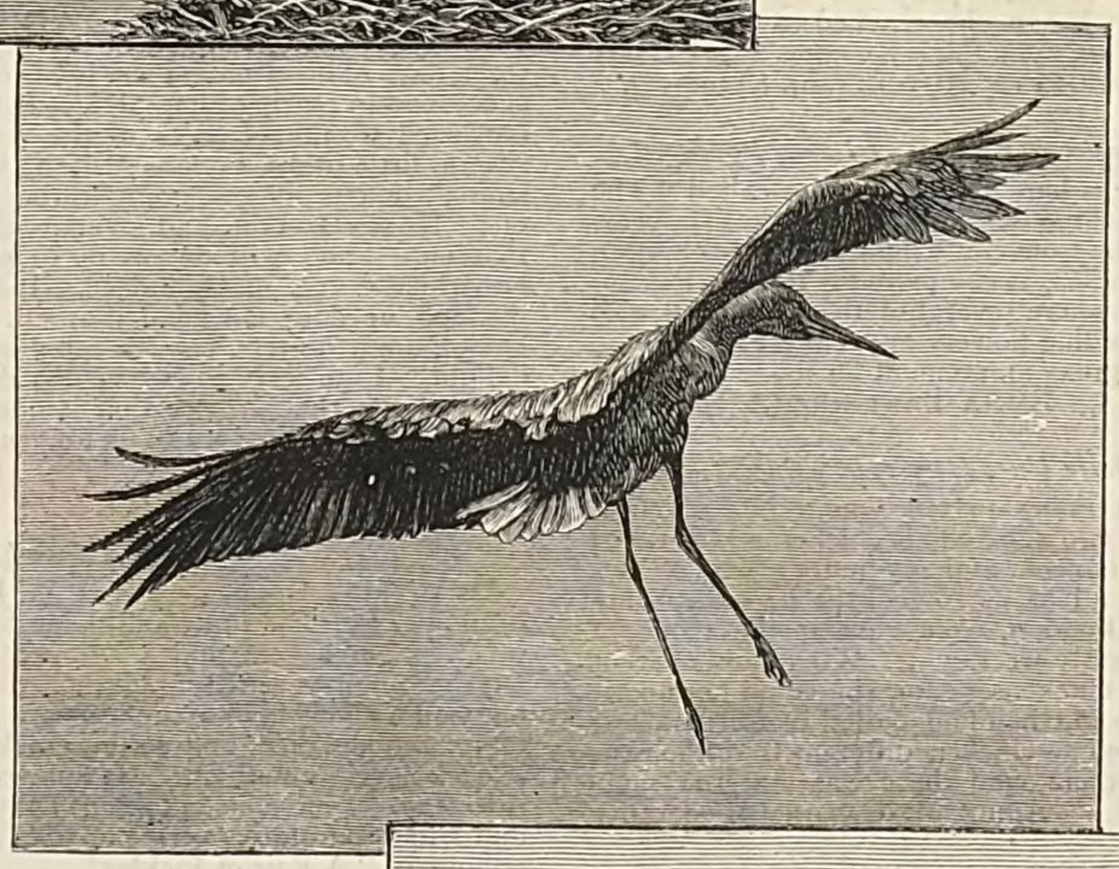
Witturah, Craneswater Park, East Southsea.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have a large yellow Persian cat called Sandy. He is a very faithful old puss, more like a dog than a cat in many ways. The funny thing about him is that he is extremely jealous. If any child comes to see me, he will march out of the room and sulk in a corner till the child leaves. Yesterday I had my canary in the room with me, and kept talking to it and giving it things. When I looked round, Master Sandy was not to be seen. I searched everywhere, but could not find him. After a long time I found him sitting in a corner of a disused room, looking very cross. I tried to make him come back with me, but he wouldn't, and has been sulking all to-day. He is sitting in that room at the present moment. I hope he won't stay long in the sulks. I like LITTLE FOLKS very much, and think it the nicest magazine I have ever read. I have taken it in for more than a year, and before that I had seven bound volumes. HELEN GARDNER (Aged 13).

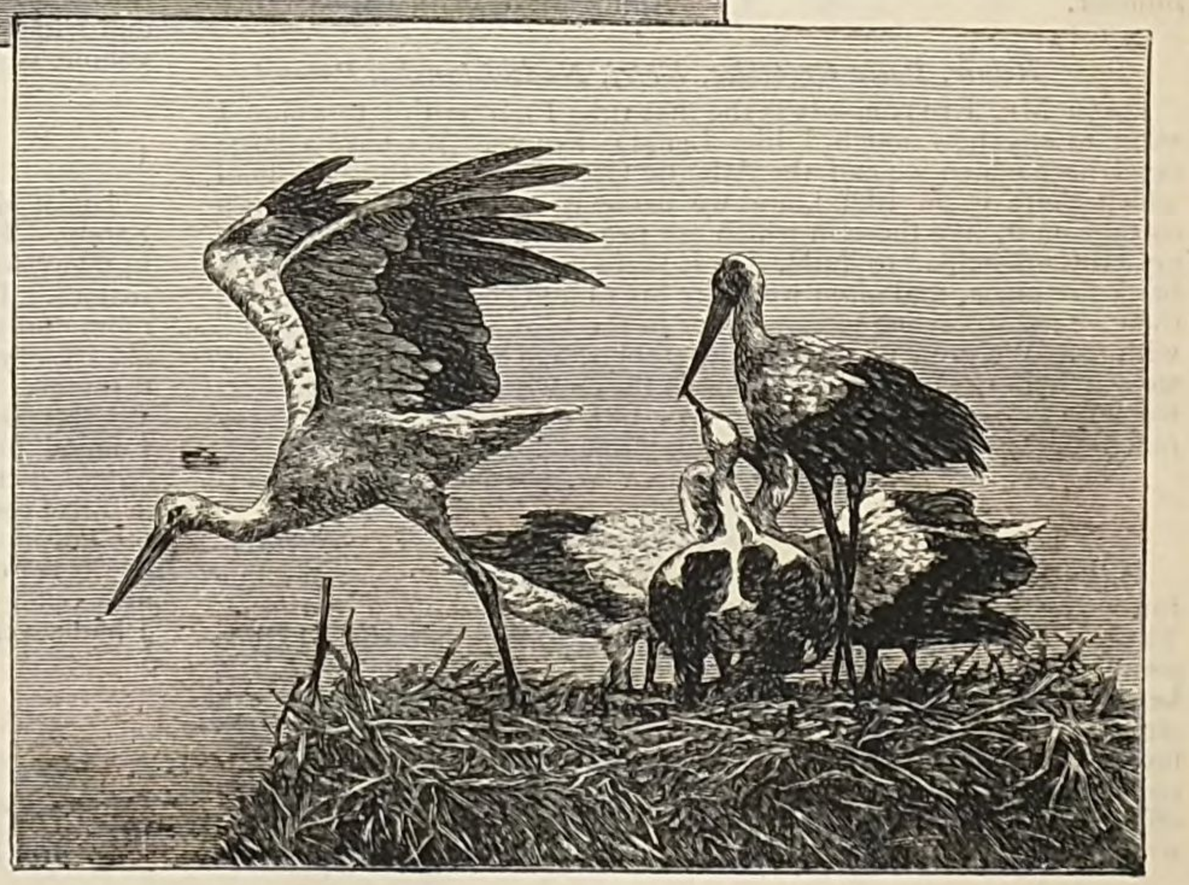
NOTE.—Each Letter sent to the Editor must be Certified by a Parent, Teacher, or some other responsible person, as being both *True and Original* as regards all the facts that are described.

PICTURE STORY WANTING WORDS.





THREE ILLUSTRATED BOOKS, of the value of HALF A GUINEA each, with OFFICERS' MEDALS of the LITTLE FOLKS Legion of Honour, will be given for the BEST STORIES having special reference to all the Pictures shown on this page.



These THREE PRIZES will be awarded as follows:—One for the Best Story sent by Readers *of the ages of* 14, 15, *and* 16; one for the Best Story sent by Readers *of* 10, 11, 12, *and* 13; and one for the Best Story sent by Readers *under* 10.

No Story must exceed 500 words in length, and each must be certified as the *unaided work* of the Competitor by a Minister, Teacher, Parent, or other responsible person.

Stories from Competitors who reside in Great Britain and Ireland must reach the Editor on or before the 10th of November, 1891; those from the Continent, English Colonies, and other places abroad, by the 14th of November.

In addition to the THREE PRIZES and OFFICERS' MEDALS, some of the most deserving Competitors will be included in a SPECIAL LIST OF HONOUR, and will be awarded MEMBERS' MEDALS of the LITTLE FOLKS Legion of Honour.

It is requested that each envelope containing a Story should have "Picture Story Wanting Words" plainly written on the left-hand top corner, and be addressed to—

"*The Editor of*
LITTLE FOLKS,
La Belle Sauvage,
Ludgate Hill,
London, E.C."

Competitors are referred to a special notice respecting the Silver Medal which was printed on page 143 of the last Volume of LITTLE FOLKS.

AN ENGAGEMENT.

"*MY PARTNER*" (*p.* 363).

MY PARTNER.

WE went to a party last night—
My two little brothers and I;
There were ices and creams, pink and white,
And a rich birthday cake, mountains high.

There was jelly, and sweet lemonade—
And we danced to a band in the hall,
Where almost a scramble we made
For the partners most pretty and tall.

And now, as I watched the rest whirl,
I felt rather jealous, you know;
For mine was a fat little girl,
Who trod, oh, so hard! on my toe.

Then I saw, in a corner alone,
A lady with such a kind face;
She'd a necklace that sparkled and shone,
And a fan all of feathers and lace.

I asked her to dance. She said "Yes";
And soon we were spinning around;
And I never once stepped on her dress,
Though it floated a yard o'er the ground.

So when they are talking to-day
Of *their* partners so pretty and tall,
I think of *my* lady, and say
That mine was the best, after all!

ELLIS WALTON.

INSIDE A BELL.

AN ADVENTURE IN BURMAH.

A BURMESE TEMPLE.

"MOUNG gleh thaibee! Yohjah sodeh! (Little brother dead! Wicked man!)," cried a little Burmese girl, and squatting on the floor, she began screaming at the top of her voice.

Moung Bah Wah, the *yohjah sodeh*, was under the influence of opium, and had just then, for some trifling offence, struck his little nephew Tsekyah Min, and to his horror the boy had fallen to the ground, and lay there as if dead. For a few minutes Bah Wah stood perfectly still, and when it dawned upon him that he had killed his own little nephew by the hasty blow, he uttered a low cry and rushed from the room.

Mah Pooh and Tsekyah Min were orphans. They lived in Rangoon, the chief port of Burmah, with their uncle Moung Bah Wah, who until lately had been very kind to them. But the last few months he had taken to opium, and had become quite a different man. He would now often remain away all day, and when he did come home, would abuse and beat the children and take away their money and pretty clothes.

Mah Pooh, like most Burmese girls, was very bright and clever, and after a little thinking, an idea came into her head which she thought would cure her uncle of opium-smoking, and make them all happy again.

When Moung Bah Wah left the room, his little niece sprang up nimbly from the floor, and following him softly on tip-toe, watched him go into the back yard, where he threw himself down on the ground groaning aloud. After a while he got up, and Mah Pooh saw him go into the bazaar, where he bought some of the daintiest cakes and finest fruits, and carefully placed them on a red-lacquered tray. He then set out on the road leading to the Shway Dàgohn (golden temple) and Mah Pooh knew that he had gone there with these offerings to atone for the killing of his nephew.

The Shway Dagohn is built on a high hill, so that its glittering golden pagoda is seen from all parts of Rangoon. There are four flights of steps, north, south, east, and west, leading up to it, and on either side of the stairs pretty

Burmese girls, dressed in bright-coloured silks and trim white jackets, sell fruit, wax candles, and painted toys to the pilgrims who come to worship at the sacred shrine.

But Moung Bah Wah had already bought his offerings, so he went straight up the steps till he came to a large paved platform which surrounded the golden dome. He sought out the spot close to a large *pepal* tree—which is held to be sacred to Buddha—where he always said his devotions, and placing the tray of fruit and cakes on the ground, he spread his prayer cloth, and prostrated himself in an attitude of contrition.

Now there are huge bronze bells placed here and there on the platform around the pagoda, so that the pilgrims can strike them to call the attention of the gods to their offerings and prayers. So after a while Bah Wah rose from his knees, and, taking up a stick, struck the bell nearest him.

But to his astonishment, instead of the bell giving out a deep clear sound, there was nothing but a low muffled noise. He struck again with still greater force, but this time a deep groan was all he heard.

Mad with terror, he flung away the stick, and fled down the steps, for his guilty conscience made him instantly think that the gods, incensed at his crime, rejected his offerings and prayers.

As soon as he had disappeared, a merry laugh rang out, and Mah Pooh sprang from her hiding-place, and running to the bell, called out—

"Heh kemiah! (Hullo you!)"

She quickly removed a loose paving stone, which was partly under the bell, and in another second had dragged out her little brother from his huge bronze cage. The bell was raised a few inches above the platform, so that the child had been able to breathe.

"We must get home as fast as we can," she said hurriedly, and hand in hand the two children ran off. They avoided the main road, and taking the by-streets, where they knew they would not meet their uncle, they soon reached home.

"Get on the bed quickly and lie quite still," said Mah Pooh, and throwing herself on the floor by her brother's side she began howling.

In another minute Moung Bah Wah came in. He looked worn and haggard, the perspiration standing in big drops on his brow. He threw himself down beside the children, and joined in his niece's howls. Presently he felt soft little arms around his neck, and warm lips kissing his cheeks, and then to his utter amazement he heard Tsekyah Min's voice saying—

"Mah bah yeh (I am well)."

"We only want our own old uncle back again," said Mah Pooh, joining in her brother's caresses.

And then she reminded him how happy they used to be before he took to that horrid opium, and how they longed for the old days again, so they had thought out this hoax just to give him a fright and make him leave off opium-smoking.

Now the Burmese are passionately fond of all sorts of fun and acting, and when Mah Pooh described how she stuffed her little brother into the bell, and told him to groan when it was struck, her uncle laughed heartily at the trick.

"Mah koamdeh! (It is good!)" he cried, and hugging the children lovingly, he told them that he would never smoke opium again, and he kept his word.

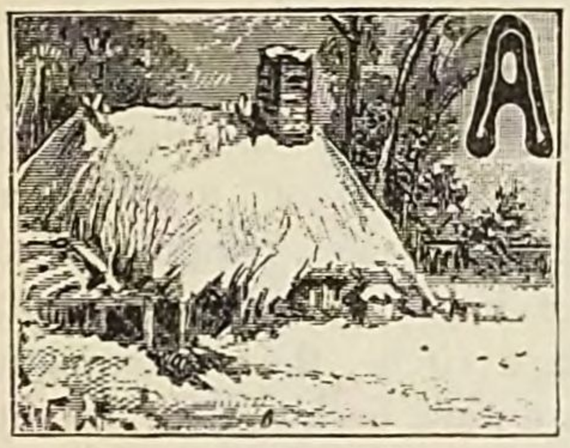
BERTHA KER.

BIRDIE'S WINGS.

BIRDIE, on that tiny spray,
How you make it bend and sway!
Though your weight be e'er so small,
Much I fear lest you should fall!

"Nay, dear child," the birdie sings:
"See, I have my trusty wings;
And I know that, come what may,
They can bear me safe away!"

KITTIE'S CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE.



A POOR sort of Christmas Neddie was likely to have, shut into the nursery with steam-kettles, his mamma, his nurses, and, worst of all, with bronchitis clutching at his chest and throat. "*Brontitis*," seven-year-old Kittie said, who, shut out from the nursery, to wander as a stranger and pilgrim through the house, sat sorrowfully on the stairs.

"Poor little Neddie! But if I were you, I'd say *bronchitis;* you'd never do for a doctor, not to know even the names of your patients' illnesses," said big brother Tom, who came springing down the stairs, with his skates in his hand.

Tom was bent on a skating expedition. Of course he was sorry for his little brother, but then, staying in and letting the skating go would do him no good: in fact, the tender-hearted lad was glad to get away, and forget it all, for a time.

"I don't mean to be a doctor, but I do want to keep Christmas properly," Kittie told him.

"And how's that?" Tom stopped to ask.

The little girl held up a small text-book to him—her last Christmas present from her aunt Mary.

"Read that," said she; and he read—

> "Haste thou to some poor sufferer's bed,
> With alms and consolations sweet.
> There is thy Bethlehem—bow the head,
> And worship at the Saviour's feet."

"Well, that isn't meant for you to do, you know," he observed, giving her back her book.

"It is—or why should it be in my book?" was the answer.

"Then you'd better go and help poor Neddie," smiled Tom over his shoulder, making a dive down the stairs again.

"I've been, and they wouldn't have me—they wouldn't open the door."

"Well, then, 'tis evident that isn't your Bethlehem," said the boy dryly, now at the foot of the stairs.

"Tom!" she called after him; and Tom looked back.

"Well?" he inquired.

"What does *alms* mean?"

"Giving something to somebody that wants it more than you," he told her at a venture.

"And *consolation sweet?*"

"A salve for somebody's wound." Then the hall door shut behind him—the boy was gone.

Kittie sighed, and began slowly to descend the stairs, at the foot of which Thomas, a black cat, her especial favourite, met her.

"Oh, Thomas, boys are so silly—aren't they?" cried she, catching the fond old thing in her arms, and kissing him.

"Meaw!" returned he shortly. Then the two betook themselves to the kitchen—a clean, warm, comfortable place, but very lonely; for cook was busy upstairs with Neddie and his nurses, and all the Christmas operations at a standstill—and this on Christmas Eve.

A heap of holly lay in the hall for somebody's hands to bind up into wreaths; so thither Kittie strayed, Thomas following her like a black shadow. But twining holly wreaths is dull work for one, and small hands like Kittie's soon grow tired, get pricked and scratched, and, worst of all, cannot reach to hang up the wreaths when done.

"Oh, Thomas, I wish you knew how, then you could climb up ever so high, and run along the pictures and brackets, and put them in place," she sighed. And Thomas answered, "Meaw," as if he wished it too.

Such a cold dull day without, such a dreary day within! The very echoes seemed to whisper as over something sad, the little girl thought, as she and Thomas wandered about.

"I know my verse means something like the Wise Men," she mused, tittering a little, thinking of Tom's funny meaning to it all. "It means going and finding somebody to be kind to—somebody ill." "Sick, and ye visited me," an echo voice whispered to her; and then her beautiful Christmas lesson was plain to her.

"To make somebody's Christmas happy would be like the Wise Men going with their gifts to Bethlehem."

"And, Thomas, Mary Day's shall be my Bethlehem, and I'll take her some mince pies, some jelly, and some oranges—I know mamma would let me. Only the jelly is in the moulds; but of course I can turn it out."

The dainty china dish was reached, the jelly turned out with a *flop*; not very shapely was it, but it was just as nice, Beth decided. It was in the basket with the mince pies and the oranges, she herself dressed in scarlet hood and cloak, Thomas standing on the topmost step at the front door to watch her off, the cuckoo clock in the hall striking the hour of three.

"I'm just like Red Riding-Hood," mused the happy child, tripping along, "only I'm not going to visit grandmamma, but going to make my Bethlehem at Mary Day's. Only I wish I was bigger and wiser, and—why, there's a snow-flake!" and the small gloved hand caught the pure white herald, come to tell of the hosts of its friends that would be here presently.

The child fancied them to be white little angels as she crossed the wide lonely common, at the further side of which stood Mary Day's solitary cottage, the wind cold and keen as a knife; and soon she stood tapping at Mary Day's door. Mary was old, blind, and bed-ridden, tended by her only son, who was away at his work all the day. She was glad to welcome her small visitor: to hear her prattle of this and that, and of the presents she had brought; glad for her to poke the fire into a blaze, to put on her kettle, make her a cup of tea—she had done it times before. Then Kittie laid the wee table for tea just by Mary's bed-side, as she liked it, told her which was jelly and which tea, and where stood the mince pies. She cut up an orange and put it close to her hands: "For you to sip at, when you like, till Will comes home," she told her next. She repeated her Christmas verse, prattled of Tom's funny meaning to it and her own; then she said "good-bye," and went out, for it was getting dark.

A white world awaited her outside, for while she had been making Christmas for Mary, the snow had been falling and drifting, was falling still. If blind Mary had known, had Kittie but known, what would happen, she would not have left the sheltering cottage. Oh, what games the wind and snow were having! how they sent the small traveller staggering back when she wanted to go forward! how the wind tugged at her hood and tried to pull it off, tossing her curls in the blinding snow! Yes, blinding. The child could not see her way, she only went round and round in a circle; the wind caught her breath: she must walk backward or not at all; and everybody knows what uncertain travelling it is, with the heels and the back of the head leading the way. And even that way was soon too much for her, her breath came in gasps; she could but cry like the seven-year-old girl she was—for she was lost. Something black on the snow, something soft pressing against her legs; it was dear old Thomas, who had either followed her or had come to meet her in his fond love. She caught him in her arms; his coming gave her courage.

"Oh, Thomas, you'll find the way, won't you?" she sobbed.

"Meaw!" promised Thomas, but it was more than he could do, he was baffled; he could stay and share her fate, but that was all. And may-hap that would be to die with her; yes, it would come to that if nobody found them on the great snowy waste of common, where not a creature seemed to be, save these two, shut away from home, Christmas and all. Only the snow-flakes, the wind, and the music of the Christmas bells were about them as they floundered here and there, and made no progress. And it was freezingly cold—yet, by-and-by, Kittie sat down to rest; she felt so tired, even sleepy; Thomas nestling in her arms, neither knowing that sitting down and falling asleep would perhaps lead to death. The snow-flakes beat in her face, but the child did not heed them; so they wreathed themselves about the two to keep off some of the cold wind—it was all they could do—and then night came down.

At home Neddie had come out of his danger, and was sweetly sleeping; and cook had prepared a cosy tea in the kitchen for Tom, the hungry skater, and Kittie, whom nobody could find in the house. Little dreamt they that she

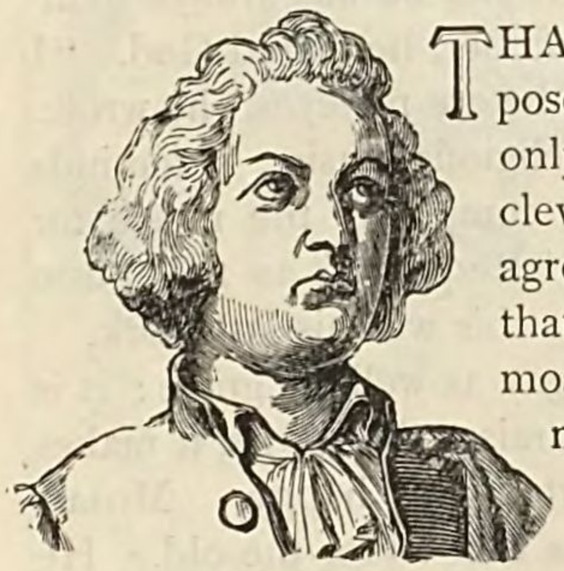
was out on the snow-drifted common, sleep stealing up to her, which, if no one found her, would soon be the sleep of death. One friend seemed to know, by loving instinct, whither the child had gone, and what to do, while the others were wondering over it. Leaping, yelping, and seeking, he tore about over the snowy waste.

"Bow-wow-wow!" called he, scratching at a large snowdrift; and "Meaw!" Thomas forlornly answered him.

Ah! good, noble Lion, the great retriever, saved his wee mistress—how, nobody ever knew; not Kittie; for when she woke from her sleep, as she called it, she was sitting up on the snow with her two brute friends, and not far from the gates at home. And then didn't Lion bark, till out came Tom and all the rest, clustering around the three like bees, and leading them in in triumph. Then followed such a patting of Lion, such a stroking of Thomas, while they munched away at their well-earned supper; nurse, meanwhile, bearing Kittie off to a warm bed, and a basinful of bread-and-milk. And on the morrow, Kittie's mamma, kissing her, said—

"Never go out again, my darling, even at Christmas time, to make a Bethlehem, without first telling mamma where you are going."

AN OLD STORY OF A CLEVER BOY.



MOZART.

THAT the famous composer Mozart was, when only a little boy, very clever, I think you will agree when I tell you that at the age when most little folk are amused with toys, playing with them, or, more likely, breaking them up, and are enjoying noise more than anything else, this wonderful child delighted in nothing so much as sweet musical sounds.

When he was only three years old he could pick out for himself the notes which form chords, and would imitate what he had heard his sister play; when he was four years old his father gave him lessons in music, and he was so quick in learning that he would learn to play a minuet in half an hour. Before he was five years old he began to make pieces for himself—"compose" them is the proper word—and his father used to write them down for him.

He was only about six years old when one day his father and a friend were much surprised to find him busy with pens, ink, and paper.

"What are you doing there?" said the father.

"Writing a concerto," replied the boy.

"It must be very brilliant, I should think; let us look at it."

"No, no! it is not ready yet," cried the young composer.

The father, however, soon had the paper in his hand, and was inclined to be much amused at its funny appearance, all blotted as it was, but on looking closely at it, he was astonished to see that the idea in itself showed great genius.

And now I must tell you that this wonderful child—Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart—was born on January 27th, 1756, and he died on December 5th, 1791, just a hundred years ago. We do not forget the great men who lived long ago: we honour their memory, and wish those who follow us to do the same; and as, if no special time for their remembrance is appointed, they are likely to be forgotten, the custom has grown up of doing something specially in memory of these great men when a hundred years can be counted since they passed away. This is called a "centenary"; and in this year comes the centenary of the gifted composer Mozart, which is why I am telling you something about him.

When Leopold Mozart, his father, discovered how clever the boy was, he devoted himself still more to his musical education, and the little Wolfgang soon became a wonder; for he could compose and play on two instruments before he was seven years old. Such a wonderful child should not be kept in Salzburg, people thought, and so thought his father; and the consequence was that Wolfgang and his sister, who

could also play very beautifully, were taken to Vienna, and visited the emperor's palace. Wolfgang had very pleasing manners: he was never shy nor awkward, and we are told that instead of hanging back, and looking frightened, as some children would have done, he was quite willing to sit on the empress's lap, and he even kissed her many times.

Nor was he afraid to play to her and to the emperor, who were delighted with his music. Many presents were given to him, and you may like to know that amongst these was a lilac-coloured dress of the finest cloth—the little vest was moire of the same colour, and the coat and top-coat had a border of gold. No doubt he wore this dress when he went to court. It had been made for the "Hereditary Duke Maximilian Franz," and it must have been greatly valued; Wolfgang had his likeness taken in it. The picture is preserved at Salzburg, his native place, so that the citizens and those who visit the "Mozart collection" can see what the gifted boy looked like in those days.

In Paris the children were also made much of; their father was delighted. "People went crazy over his children," he wrote. But if he was pleased with the welcome they had in Paris, what must he have felt when he reached London. Soon after their arrival they were summoned into the presence of King George III. and Queen Charlotte, and had the honour of playing before them. Some days afterwards, when the family were walking in St. James's Park, the king and queen came to drive there; the king opened the carriage window, smiled, bowed, and waved his hands.

Wolfgang played several pieces from Handel and Bach perfectly, and had the honour of playing the organ in the Chapel Royal; he also performed at concerts, and astonished everyone by his marvellous talent. No wonder the father was pleased: he wrote to his friends at Salzburg that there was never anything like it; that they had been well treated at other courts, but never as they had been by their Majesties the King and Queen of England. The children returned home loaded with presents, in very good health and spirits, and, surprising to say, not spoiled by all the notice they had received.

If I were to leave off my story now, we should carry with us only sunny memories of this gifted composer. And though it is only fair to tell you that many clouds passed over his life, and that, like many other great people, he often met with sore disappointments, and often had anxiety about money matters, as I am writing for young folk, I will not make my talk too sad by entering fully into the story of his after life.

I will only tell you that he made many and many a journey, in the hope of finding some settled employment, but though people admired his music, they left him with hardly enough to live upon.

When he visited France, as a young man, he did not like it as well as he had liked it when a child. He did not like the people, nor their language, nor their music. He said of the French: "They cannot sing; they scream!"

But though he had very little money, and often only one small room, he was always light-hearted, and, like his father, he feared God. "I have had God always before my eyes," he wrote. And so his music is religious music: it reminds us of a prayer. He composed the music for some services, and a "Requiem," as the music for a funeral is called: this was his last work.

Mozart's music is gay as well as grave: it is bright and sportive, it raises the spirits, it makes people feel light-hearted and happy. Mozart wrote for the young as well as for the old. He was very, very poor when he died—so poor that he was buried in the common ground set apart in every place for those persons whose relations are not able to pay for their burial; and when his wife and some friends visited the churchyard some time afterward, no one could point out the spot where the great composer had been laid to rest.

But though the music he composed is his best memorial, his countrymen have now raised monuments in his honour. In the square of St. Michael, Salzburg, is a bronze statue of Mozart; in his hand he holds a sheet of music, upon which are some words from the "Requiem"; and in the churchyard of St. Mark, Vienna, is a mourning figure holding the "Requiem" and a wreath of laurel.

Nevertheless, as we have said, his most lasting memorial is the delight which, by the use of his great gift, he prepared for his fellow men. And this is the best lesson that our remembrance of Mozart can teach us.

E. H. H.

A VERY QUEER FAMILY

THERE ONCE WAS A FARMER
WHO OWNED A YOUNG PIG,
THAT COULD STAND ON ITS HIND
LEGS AND DANCE
A SCOTCH JIG;
HE ALSO POSSESSED A REMARKABLE COW,
WHO PLAYED THE GUITAR — WELL
YOU HARDLY KNEW HOW;
THE FARMER HAD TOO, THOUGH IT
SEEMS QUITE ABSURD,
A TALENTED CAT THAT
COULD SING LIKE A BIRD
A SQUIRREL WHO REALLY
WAS QUITE A GOOD DRUMMER,
AND A DOG —
WHO COULD WHISTLE "THE
LAST ROSE OF
SUMMER"
SMALL WONDER INDEED,
THAT WITH ALL THESE
TOGETHER,
THE FARMER CARED
NAUGHT FOR THE
STATE OF THE WEATHER!

HOW NELLIE WON THE PRIZE.

"NOW, children," said mother one bright day in summer, "I will give sixpence to the one who finds out where the speckled hen has made her nest. She has wandered away somewhere, and I am anxious to know where she has gone."

Little Nell opened her eyes wide. Sixpence! Why, that was what she had been longing for ever since yesterday morning, and here was a chance to get it. Oh, if only she could find the speckled hen! Well, at any rate, she would try.

What did little Nell want with sixpence? I will tell you. The day before, in wandering down the meadow all alone, as she was very fond of doing, she met a little ragged boy who was sobbing as though his heart would break.

Now Nell's heart was a very tender one, and it grieved her very much to see anyone in trouble, so she stopped the poor boy, and said to him—

"Little boy, what is the matter? Do please tell me why you are crying so."

The boy looked up at kind little Nell, and said between his sobs—

"Oh, missie! my mother is so very ill and cannot work to get any money, and father is dead, and the wicked landlord says he will turn us out of the house if we do not pay all the rent by to-morrow. We have got it all but sixpence, and I don't know where that is to come from."

Now I am quite sure that if Nell had told all this to her father and mother they would at once have given her the money to give to poor Jack—for that was his name; but she was a very timid little girl, who kept most of her thoughts to herself, and it never occurred to her to tell anyone what had happened. So she just thought and thought, until she felt as though she could not think any longer; but, oh joy!—here was a chance of saving little Jack and his mother. She must find the speckled hen!

Away, away down the garden, through the meadow, peering into every possible place, went Nellie, but it was all of no use; no speckled hen could she see, and at last, hot and tired, she sank down under the old elm-tree which spread its leafy boughs right across the pretty brook rippling along at the bottom of the field.

How long she lay there, resting her sleepy head against the friendly trunk, and gazing with dreamy eyes into the clear cool water, she never knew; but by-and-by the shiny stones at the bottom began to dance up and down in the queerest way imaginable, and presently from among them there sprang right on to the grass at her side the prettiest, sweetest elf of all the elves who ever lived.

She was dressed in a shining gauzy robe, which looked exactly as if it were made of butterflies' wings, and she wore on her head a dear little hat, which Nellie felt sure had come from among the bluebells in the wood behind the house.

"Little girl," said the fairy, "you are looking for the speckled hen. Come with me, and we will see what can be done."

Now little Nell, though such a timid child, did not feel one bit afraid of the beautiful fairy, and she got up at once and followed her, down, down into the shining water which flowed so merrily along below the banks of the brook.

It was just a bit cold, but she did not mind that at all, for was she not going to find the speckled hen, and win the sixpence for poor little Jack?

On they went over the slippery stones, past numberless bright flowers growing upon the banks, until they came to a golden gate, at which the fairy tapped with a lovely wand she carried in her hand, and it was immediately opened by another fairy, just as beautiful as herself.

"Conduct us to the Queen, Hazlebell," said Nellie's guide: "we come on business of great importance. This is the little Girl of the Tender Heart."

"Oh yes," answered Hazlebell, "we know her well. The Fairy Queen will be very glad to see the little Girl of the Tender Heart. Come!"

Nellie's heart beat high. Then this was Fairyland, and the fairies knew her and loved her. How strange it was!

By-and-by they came in sight of the prettiest thing Nellie had ever seen—a lovely throne made of sunbeams and feathery clouds, and on it sat the Fairy Queen.

"So this is our little friend of the Tender Heart?" she said, with such a smile that Nellie's breath came and went in little gasps of astonishment and delight. "Welcome, little one, to Fairyland. You wish to find the speckled hen," she continued kindly, "and I will tell you the way. When you have crossed the Garden of Unselfishness you will meet a giant whose name is Fear; slay him with this sword," holding out to her a glistening wand. "When you have done this you will find the speckled hen. Go, my child, and Good Fortune be with you."

Scarcely had she spoken these words than the throne on which she sat began to melt away, the Fairy Queen disappeared, the bright flowers were to be seen no longer, and oh, what a disappointment! Nellie opened her eyes to find that it was nothing but a dream!

She was stiff and cold from having lain so long on the grass, and she felt very much inclined to cry at this ending to the lovely vision. But no, that would never do; she must try harder than ever to find the speckled hen.

As she lifted her eyes and looked across the field, she saw standing at the gate which separated two meadows a little girl from the village, named Mary, who she knew had been up to the house to fetch milk for her poor sick brother. Now Mary was a very little girl, a good deal smaller than Nellie herself, and she could not manage to climb the stile with the can in her hand, as she would be sure to spill the milk if she tried to do so.

Nellie knew very well that she ought to go to help her, but she said to herself, "If I do, it will take me ever so long, and perhaps the others will find the hen first, and I shall not get the money."

Then she remembered what the Fairy Queen had said about the Garden of Unselfishness. Yes, surely this was what she meant; and Nellie jumped up with a resolute air, and began to run along towards the stile where Mary was as fast as her legs would carry her. But oh, horror!

Scarcely had she reached the middle of the field when she saw, right in front of her, the great black cow, of which as long as she could remember she had had the greatest dread, and out of whose way she had always tried to keep.

What should she do? go back and leave little Mary to manage as best she could? No; the fairy had told her to kill the Giant Fear: surely he had come to her now; and with a noble resolve to be brave, she darted onward, past the great black cow, who blinked her sleepy eyes at her, as much as to say, "So you are afraid of me, are you?" until at last she reached the stile where little Mary stood crying with despair.

Oh, it was indeed worth it all, that smile of joy on Mary's little thin face, as Nellie took the heavy can from her, and helped her over the stile!

"There you are, Mary," she said. "Now you can get home all right, can't you?"

But what was that? Cackle, cackle, cackle! Surely, oh surely, it was the speckled hen, who had made her nest in the hedge just by the side of the stile. Yes, this was what the fairy meant.

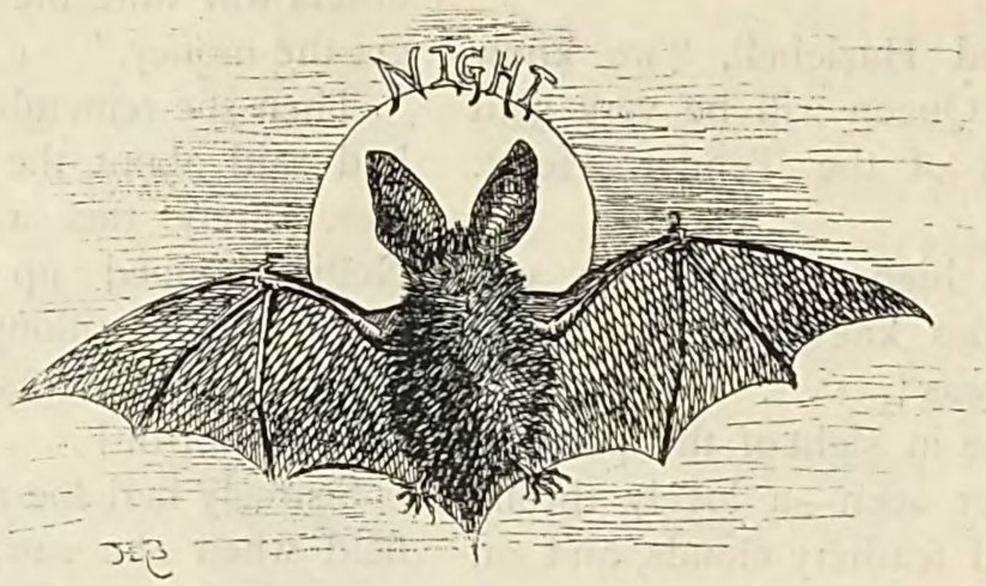
Little Nell saw it all now: the Garden of Unselfishness, the Giant Fear, and at the end the prize she had been longing to gain.

I think I need hardly tell you, children, how eagerly Nellie ran home, or how pleased her mother was to give her the well-earned sixpence, or how little Jack was made happy, and the poor sick mother by-and-by became well and strong again; no, I will tell you nothing about it, but I will leave you to guess it all, only asking you to remember how Nellie won the prize.

CONSTANCE MORGAN.

A CURIOUS CREATURE.

NOW really what
Would you be at,
You horrid thing
Folk call a "bat"?
You wheel and reel,
You flap and flounce,
As if of sense
You'd not an ounce.



The *light* you shun,
The *dark* you court,
You flick my face
By way of sport,
And when I try
To pay you back,
You're off upon
Another tack!

You're not bright-plumed,
You cannot sing,
Nor do you do
One pleasant thing.
You've leath'ry wings,
A furry skin,
And eyes just like
Black beads let in.

* * *

I'm fond of *birds*,
I do love mice;
But "half and half"
I *can't* think nice.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

TO SCHOOL AND AWAY.

By H. ATTERIDGE, *Author of "Bunty and the Boys," "Uncle Silvio's Secret," &c.*

CHAPTER XI.—REPENTANCE.

ON that Monday afternoon when the boys ran away from Applewich Court you remember that Gerald suddenly went off with Victor, because there was a message at last that Dr. Grindham wanted him.

And what do you think the doctor wanted him for? Why, because Gerald's father had come to see him.

Think of that! He had little known that day who was in the study. His own father was there, all love and kindness, anxious to know why the boy was unhappy and home-sick, and trying to arrange with Dr. Grindham some plan for helping Gerald to get on more happily.

When Gerald wrote that piteous letter, begging to go home at once, because he could learn nothing and he could not sleep, there was one sentence in the letter that made his father more anxious than all the rest; and that was, "Victor Maine has come to school here." And although Gerald added, "I don't like him," Mr. Brierly understood quite well that boys might quarrel one day and be friends the next. He knew enough of Victor Maine to prefer rather to bring Gerald home again than to have him become the companion of Victor. He knew Victor Maine had been expelled from three schools, and had run away from another; Mr. Brierly did not choose to tell Gerald so much against another boy, but he hoped Gerald would obey him, without knowing all his reasons.

Tipkins, the gardener and handy man at Mr. Brierly's house, was the first who threw a doubt upon Gerald's obedience.

Tipkins had no idea what tales he was telling when he said to "the master" on the first Monday night—

"Ay, sir, the place do seem lonely without Master Gerald knockin' about. But he will make friends wherever he goes, sir."

"I am sure he will," said the father proudly.

"Bless you, yes, sir! he will make friends. Why, there was he, on Saturday morning, with Master Maine from the Old Lodge—all along the road with the bicycle. I never saw 'em together before; and there they were like brothers. I was all along the road behind

them; and they made as nice a pair as anyone could wish to see. Oh, he did win everybody's heart, Master Gerald did, sir!"

The gardener meant it kindly, but the news hurt the father like a cut. He asked a few questions quietly, and then he went into the house, very thoughtful, and with a sigh.

So the very morning of that last walk to the station together, when he promised Gerald the pony and when he talked gravely to the boy about school, and heard plenty of good resolutions in return—that very morning Gerald had come all along that same road with Victor Maine, the boy whom he had never allowed him to have as a companion. No doubt their talk had been of school, and what views would Victor Maine have given him? Then he remembered how Gerald had named Victor that evening, and said he had a bicycle.

"I thought I could have trusted him," was the word in his father's mind; and no boy or girl can understand what a parent's sorrow is if they cannot trust their own child.

Then came the letter begging to be taken home, and saying Victor Maine had come to Applewich Court. Mr. Brierly wrote to Dr. Grindham, found he was away from home, and went to see him on the very day of his return. In fact, the visitor arrived ten minutes after the doctor, and they had lunch together, and then went into the study for a smoke and talk. There had been no time for complaints from Mr. Peters. The only reason why that page-boy with the silver buttons was sent out for Gerald was because Dr. Grindham wanted to give him the happy surprise of seeing his father in the study when he would come in. And the only reason of the father's visit was to comfort the boy, to make him content at school, and in private, without any reproaches, to give him a kind word of warning against Victor Maine—just to say to him, "Now, can I trust you, Gerald?"—and to hear him say, "Yes."

Oh! if only Gerald had known why Dr. Grindham wanted him that day!

They waited very long, the father and the master; and the boy did not come. They sent again; and he could not be found. At the worst, Dr Grindham thought he was at one of his freaks and playing truant for an afternoon. Six o'clock came; Mr. Vincent brought word that there were two boys missing; they had taken their light overcoats and their plain cloth caps. The boys were Gerald Brierly and Victor Maine.

Still, hope of their return was not given up. But when the neighbourhood was searched, and when Mr. Brierly waited at the school till dark, and yet no tidings came—then he knew with grief and pain that Gerald had run away—and with that boy, of all others!

Word was sent to the police—not that school runaways are put in prison, but because the police have the best chance of finding missing persons. The boys had been seen at the circus; and they had gone by train to town.

After a most unhappy night spent in weary search, and in an agony of fear as to the fate of his foolish boy, Mr. Brierly heard next day that Victor Maine was laid up in a London hospital, having had his leg broken climbing a wall in a miserable part of the town somewhere near Saffron Hill.

The doctor brought this news. He had come to see Gerald's mother, who had fallen ill when she heard the boy was gone.

The nervous old gentleman at the Old Lodge had got quite a crooked and wrong view of the matter. "That Brierly boy," he thought, "had led his dear grandson into all sorts of mischief, caused him to run away from school, and then left the dear boy alone, without a penny, and with his leg broken."

"That does not sound true; it's not like Gerald," thought Mr. Brierly. "I must go and see that precious grandson myself."

So, with the company of the doctor, he went to the hospital, from which the boy with the broken leg could not yet be removed.

You may be sure he had patience even with Victor Maine when he saw him on his bed of suffering. And to do Victor Maine justice, there was something in Mr. Brierly's great trouble that forced him to tell the truth.

He told the whole story—even going as far back as that first day on the road, when he "crammed poor Jerry just for a lark"; and, said the sick lad, "I'm afraid, sir, Gerald did get into a lot of rows after that when he went to school. I'm sorry I set him on. He did

nothing but play tricks, and then he got afraid of the master. And you know I dislike school, sir; so I said to him we should run away."

It was agony for the boy to stir, and he knew he would have to lie there for weeks before he could be taken home.

"I ran ever so far along the walls," he said, telling of his escape that morning. "My foot slipped when I was getting down, and I went with a crash. Will you tell me, sir, when you find Jerry? I'm awfully sorry, sir; 'twas all my doing. Jerry was awfully good, only for me."

Mr. Brierly took pity on him, and promised to send him word. But, alas! where was he to find his own son?

He knew now that when the two boys parted the other was taken away to the seaside, though for what sort of musical employment the sick boy could not tell. Word was sent to the police at all the principal seaside towns to be on the look-out for a dark-bearded shabby-looking man, having with him a fair bright-haired boy of twelve.

The fair hair was sought by the police in vain. Several of them saw Gerald at Brighton with his hurdy-gurdy. But that Italian boy with the jet black locks and brown face and hands did not attract their attention for a moment. The London gentleman's missing son was fair, with bright hair.

At last, after the most unhappy days of all their life, the father and mother got Miss Skeffington's telegram: Gerald was found. The most unhappy time of all their life! Who could reckon how much pain Gerald's escapade had cost to those who loved him most?

Well, he was heard of at last. The father did not wait a moment. He was off at once to town, and away that very evening to Brighton. Before half-past seven o'clock his cab from the station dashed up to the door in the garden wall, with the long glass-roofed passage beyond, leading up to the house.

The lady with the silvery hair met him in the hall, but she would not be present at the meeting; neither would she stop him for a moment.

"How can I thank you?" the father said.

"Pray, do not. He is in there, poor boy!" And she opened the door of the room for Mr. Brierly, and gently closed it after him.

Edith and Fluffy had been taken away to their lessons, without even being told that anyone was coming. You see, they had been kept very much in the dark as to what was happening all along. They had never been told that Gerald was missing until he came with his starved face and his hurdy-gurdy.

Since they were sent to evening study, the smeared and painted boy had done his best to wash himself white and to eat a hearty meal. His hair was not yet very white, nor his face very fair; but he looked much more like Gerald. And the meal of good food—the first for ten days—gave him a little strength. He looked like Gerald wasted and thin after a long illness, when the well-known voice sounded outside the door at last, saying, "How shall I thank you?" and he sprang up eagerly to go to his father.

Perhaps when this father stepped into the room he did not know whether his son was sorry or not. But he knew better than a thousand words could have told him when the wretched-looking boy came straight into his arms and straight to his heart. "Father, *can* you forgive me?" And never had the running away looked so black, and heartless, and ungrateful as it did in that moment to Gerald: never had he loved his father so much in his life before.

A telegram was sent out at once to Gerald's mother, saying, "Safe and well." And perhaps the most touching part of his parents' forgiveness was their never trying to tell him all they had suffered. Well, they could not have told it to anyone; so, with quiet patience, they did not even try.

Edith and Fluffy were almost jealous when they found that their own papa had been for half an hour in the house, and they had not even been told he was coming. Down they ran, and burst in upon the end of that happy trustful talk that the happy father and the poor runaway had enjoyed together.

"Well I declare! Papa dear, I'm so glad you've come. *Isn't* Gerald a naughty boy? How's mother?"

They had some supper all together, and then

Gerald and his father said "Good-bye" to Miss Skeffington and the two girls.

"Look here!" said Fluffy, "what is to be done with the hurdy-gurdy? Can't I have it, Jerry, to practise on?"

Fluffy would have thought practising on the hurdy-gurdy very nice and easy. But Miss Skeffington objected, and told Jane to carry it up to the lumber-room until they found its owner.

Then came the last "good-bye"; and off in the cab, under his father's protection, went the rescued hurdy-gurdy boy.

In the train he told the story of his captivity—told of poor little Gemma's hard life, and how good a heart she had. Nor were the cakes forgotten, and the long endurance of hunger by which Gemma saved them up for him day after day. His father promised that, if possible, poor Gemma should be found, and repaid for being Gerald's friend, and saved from a beggar's life.

Great was the joy of Gerald's mother when the travellers reached home. It was shocking to see the boy that had gone to school healthy and happy coming back now starved, thin, and clad in the shabby old greenish-brown of an organ-grinder. An old suit that he had worn before he went to Applewich Court was looked out for him, and he appeared a little more like the Gerald they had lost. The day closed happily; life and strength had come back to his mother with the sight of him.

"I saw tears on mother's cheek," he said afterwards. "Mother must never shed a tear for me again."

Gerald little dreamed that his father repeated his words afterwards proudly. "Think of the boy saying that to me, with his own eyes moist. And he is only twelve years old."

The first thing in the morning, before the children were down from the nursery, he was at his father's side.

"May I go back to Applewich Court? I want to go to-day."

"But why in such a hurry, my boy?"

"I made up my mind last night," said Gerald. "I want *to make up*, you know; and this is the only thing I can do. I was thinking you needn't come all the way. I'll go by myself—honour bright!—or with Tipkins."

His father liked the boy's resolve; the effort would do him good, even if he found it harder than he expected at Applewich Court. Gerald had certainly begun bravely "to make up"; and his father did not stand in the way of his first good resolution. It was manly and brave, and if he liked to try, he might go back alone to Applewich Court.

The little ones were at their breakfast upstairs only Jess, and the twins, and Ali Baba. Gerald peeped in without their seeing him. Jess, with the long fair hair, so like a little Edith, was playing the part of elder sister with great gravity, and tying a pinafore on Ali Baba, who was up in his chair laughing and kicking, spoon in hand. The two little girls with the short cropped hair and sailor frocks looked chubby and happy feeding their canary, with the cage down on the window-sill in the morning sun.

"Come," said nurse, "your breakfast is cooling." And Dicky called, "Sweet!—sweet!" and baby laughed, and the golden sunshine came in through the green leaves at the open window.

Gerald had seen the little ones in "home, sweet home" again. He stole away on tiptoe downstairs. Why should these babies know of his disgrace and wrong-doing? They had never been told, and it was wiser not to tell them now, that their big brother had ever come and gone. He looked upon them all as babies, you must know, and felt himself to be quite a man this morning, when he was going away to face a sea of troubles at school alone.

When he said a last "good-bye" to his father and mother, he went off, with Tipkins for an escort—not because they did not trust his honour—for indeed they did—but because the journey down into Surrey was long for a boy of twelve years old.

The man had a letter from Mr. Brierly to Dr. Grindham; the letter was no comfort to Gerald, because he had no idea of what it contained.

"Tipkins," said Gerald in the train, "I thought I was going to have a pony of my own at Christmas, and you were to take care of him in the stable at the back of the garden."

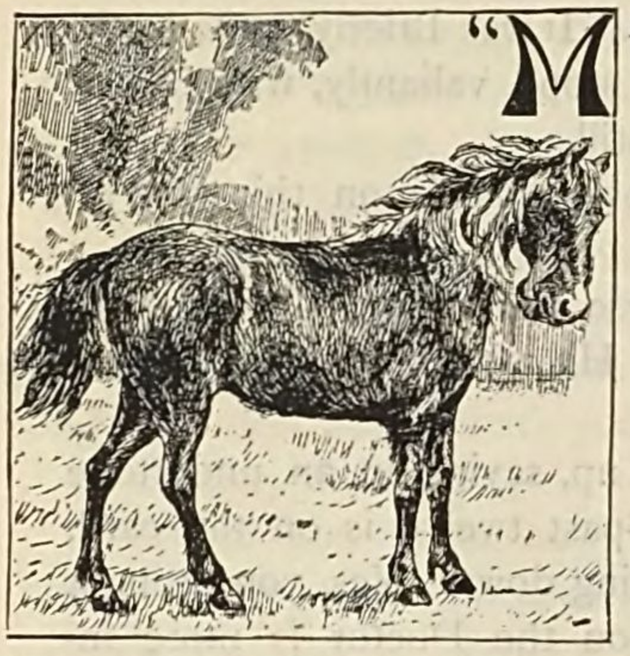
"Indeed, sir."

"But I suppose I can't ever get the pony now, Tipkins."

ROUND THE CHRISTMAS-TREE. (*See p.* 380.)

"I should think not, sir!" said Tipkins honestly.

CHAPTER XII.—TURNING A NEW LEAF.



"MASTER said I was only to see you safe to the door, Master Gerald; and here's the letter for the gentleman."

They were at the lodge gate of Applewich Court, and Tipkins had pulled the hanging iron handle and set the bell ringing.

"Thank you, Tipkins. Good-bye!—Stop!—Tell me, is my face clean? Do you see any black stuff on my hair?"

"You're all right, sir; there's just a brown shade on your face. Your hair is as bright as a guinea, sir."

The lodge-keeper opened the gate, and Gerald entered alone.

"Why, Master Brierly!"

"Yes, here I am, Dobbs." Gerald could not help adding: "Have you been lonely without me?" And trying to laugh, he ran away to the house as fast as he could go.

He knew the boys' way in from the garden by a glass door at the side. He stood on the step and looked in, with his face against the glass, and his heart beating terribly. All the classes were going on at this hour. There was the broad bright corridor, with its pavement of coloured tiles and its roof of oak. It seemed months since he had been there. Oh! if he could only get in, and all the way through the house, straight to the study, without meeting anyone!

He must make the attempt, or he would be found on the step. He opened the glass door, and got in, and then ran for his life all along the corridor, past the doors of the class-rooms. One door opened at the sound of the running feet; but Mr. Vincent, looking out to see who was careering along like that, only saw a boy rushing round a distant corner.

How familiar, and pleasant, and home-like the place seemed, after all! There was the passage to the store-room! What silly wild things he had done at Victor Maine's suggestion! The thought of Victor was bitter to Gerald now. The elder boy had been a bad friend to him, but he had heard with horror about the broken leg; and who would not pity the unhappy lad, far from home, lying for weeks on a bed of pain?

Here was the library door. There were other rooms off the far side of it, and Gerald knew which was the study.

How he hoped the doctor was inside; and yet how he dreaded him!

"Ho! my! Master Brierly!" cried a boy's voice. It startled Gerald. But it was only the page with the silver buttons.

"Yes," said Gerald, "I've come back. Where's the Doctor? Will you give him this letter?"

"He's in the study, sir," said the page, and knocked and went in, with a readiness quite in contrast to Gerald's trembling and sinking of heart and hope.

Out came the page in a few moments. "Doctor Grindham wants you, Master Brierly. Same message as I gave you before. Shouldn't like to be in your shoes!" And the page-boy gave an impudent grin of delight as he saw Gerald go in.

There in his arm-chair, before a table full of papers, was Dr. Grindham. All Gerald's former fears rushed back upon him when he saw the man whom Victor had first made him dread. Yes, there he was—with searching eyes, stiff, trim, grey whiskers, and awful black university gown.

"Sir," said the boy, in a most unnatural voice—for he could hardly speak at all, and he was trying to speak loud—"I beg your pardon for running away."

Doctor Grindham spoke in short sharp tones. "Come here. What did you run away from? *You little coward!*"

It was a hard thing to be called a coward—hardest of all to be called a coward just when he was trying to be brave. Timidly he came nearer, as he was bidden, wishing the Turkey carpet of the study were soft enough for him to sink in

it altogether out of sight, or that the floor could swallow him up.

His father's letter lay on the table. The sight of the dear handwriting gave him courage.

"I want you to tell me why you ran away," repeated Dr. Grindham.

"I got into a scrape about putting flies in Mr. Peters' desk and knocking down Sneider," Gerald said; "and Mr. Peters thought I was meddling with the things in the desk, and I wasn't, indeed, sir."

"That is not exactly yet the reason why you went," said Dr. Grindham. "When I sent for you that day, why did you not come?"

"I—I—was afraid," said Gerald.

"Precisely so—the fear of punishment," said the doctor. "Now, do you understand what I meant when I reminded you that you were a little coward?"

"Gerald's face flamed. "I hope I am not now, sir."

"We shall see," from the doctor. He was very cold and stern; and Gerald thought with longing of his father's kindness. "Come now! What do you think a boy deserves who runs away from school—through cowardice, mind—and gives his parents a long time of misery?"

"I don't know, sir," stammered Gerald. "I suppose I deserve just anything; I'm sure I do."

"Very well, then." He scribbled a few words on a card. "Just take this down to Mr. Peters. You will find him in your own schoolroom. The boys are there, of course. Go straight in."

Doctor Grindham watched the boy sharply as he took the card. He felt the hand tremble, and he saw the face, which was very thin and pale, turn a little whiter.

Gerald said nothing but "Yes, sir," and walked straight out of the room with the card. "It is my sentence," he thought. "Never mind. It can't be worse than old Solfeggio's stick—he broke it on my shoulders the night before I got away, because I had not coppers enough. I ought to be able to stand a thrashing after that. But the other boys—what will they think when they see me?"

In great trouble, Gerald made his way to the broad corridor and to the class-room. In he went, without looking to right or left.

"Mr. Peters!" he went right up near the master's desk, and, in fact, made Mr. Peters jump by coming so softly and so suddenly. "Sir!—this is for you—from the Doctor!"

All the boys were staring. A loud murmur ran round the room. It was Brierly come back. Meanwhile, Gerald stood valiantly, with fear in his face, but quite still.

"You don't know what is on this card?" asked Mr. Peters.

"Oh no, of course not!" said Gerald, with truth in his voice. He would not have read it for anything.

Mr. Peters stood up, saying in an undertone to Gerald: "Half-past twelve is on the card. Three minutes coming down. Yes, you brought it at once. I tell you the Doctor is more indulgent than I should be." Then he spoke out loud:—"Attention! Doctor Grindham wishes it to be known that Gerald Brierly receives a free pardon; that no one is even to speak again of his absence; that—" and here he read the pencilled writing on the card—"'to a great extent the whole affair was not Gerald Brierly's fault, as a letter of his father's explains. I wish him,' says the Doctor, 'to go back at once to his place in the school, and to be treated in every respect as if he had not left us.'"

"Hurrah!" shouted Tommy Coker at the top of his voice. And the whole school burst into a cheer, prompted partly, perhaps, by an honest pity for the sad looks and starved face of their runaway companion.

"May I go and thank the Doctor, sir?" said Gerald. And so he made his escape in the midst of the cheering.

"Well—you brave boy?" said the awful doctor, quite kindly, when he came into the study again, brimming over with gratitude. "It would have gone hard with you if you had not shown some pluck, though, and taken that card at once. Do you know what was on it?"

"Not all, sir," from Gerald; "Mr. Peters read some."

"Well, that your pardon depended on whether you were brave enough to give it at once and without reading it, and I knew Mr. Peters could tell that by seeing whether you were honestly afraid of your fate or not. Now I shall not call you a coward again."

"Thank you, sir," said Gerald fervently. "I never thought of it like that—not as cowardice, you know, when we ran away."

"Well, it was!" said Dr. Grindham, not at all sternly, but in a kind and patient tone. "Look at it in this way, Gerald. We all have to be brave soldiers and to stand in battle, in one way or another. The two best qualities of a soldier are bravery and obedience to orders. If you think of all your troubles, you will see they were the result first of disobedience, and then of cowardice. So you have been a bad soldier. But how old are you, Gerald?"

"Twelve, sir."

"Ah! if you begin now," said Dr. Grindham, "brave and obedient, what a splendid soldier you can be between this and twenty—before you begin the long fight for the right in the world."

It was from that day that Gerald Brierly began to like Dr. Grindham, and to understand that he was kind-hearted, anxious to help his boys to be brave men; and that a black gown was not a thing to be feared.

From that day, too, he began to work at school. Tommy Coker was a faithful friend, and they had plenty of honest fun between them, without mischief or getting into trouble.

"Hullo!" said Sneider one day (you remember Sneider, the gawky lad with the hay-colour hair). "Hullo!" said Sneider. "Here's some fun! My cousin Dorinda is at school at Brighton, and I know all about Brierly when he was away. Why, he was a hurdy-gurdy boy!"

"Shut up!" shouted Tommy politely. "The Doctor said no one was to talk any more about Brierly going away."

"Oh! I shan't talk any more!" said Sneider. But he went through a dumb show of walking about on the playground, supporting an airy hurdy-gurdy on his knee, and turning an imaginary handle.

It was hard for Gerald to stand so much teasing from Sneider. But he knew there was bravery in endurance, as well as in action. So he was brave, and kept silence. And by little and little Sneider's unkindness ceased; and the others who had learned the story from him gave up calling poor Gerald, on the playground or the cricket-field, "The Hurdy-gurdy Boy."

There were letters from home to cheer him during the long struggle to do well in that first term at school. Towards the end, news came that Victor Maine was well enough to be taken abroad, chiefly that his grandfather might have peace and quiet. The next news was that a man named Jobbins, known under an Italian name as Solfeggio, had been taken up by the police, and was now in prison for changing a false bank-note at a restaurant, where he gave dinner one evening to two boys. He was said to have a hoard of money made by changing the notes of his friends the forgers; and he was also making money by sending out unhappy boys and girls to sing for him as street musicians, while he stood among the crowd watching and counting the money given to them.

The same letter told Gerald that Gemma had been found at last by his father; and that she had been placed in an orphan school.

"I am so glad!" thought Gerald, who was always wishing to hear of the rescue of his poor little friend. "But I wonder what has become of the monkey? Poor Toto! Would they take him in at the orphanage? Or has he gone to prison?"

Nearer and nearer came Christmas, and the dear old house among the trees was very gay within, being made ready for the young people coming home for the holidays. For the Brierlys there never had been such a Christmas before. Gerald was coming home from Applewich Court, and Edith and Fluffy from Brighton.

The evergreens were up. It was positively known that cook had been stoning the raisins and making the mince pies. Papa had been seen getting in with a latch-key, and stealing up the stairs with as many parcels as a pedlar; and everybody pretended not to have seen him, because it was a point of honour that nothing should be known about the presents until they were shown.

Then as for the Christmas-tree—Tipkins had been heard staggering in with it when the children were in bed; so it must have been a huge one!

"Mother" was getting the tree ready. No one peeped into the room where it was, but it was believed to be most beautiful and glorious,

and the excitement of the little ones was wild, and their curiosity almost past bearing.

Then the waits! They sang outside in the night, and Jess and the twins woke up, and stood by the white window curtain in the moonlight, saying, "They are singing for Christmas; and Edith and Fluffy are coming; and won't it be fun to have Gerald!"

Three days too soon, Jess was planning how the stockings were to be hung on the beds.

"Baby's sock is too little. Can't I hang one of my stockings for baby?"

"No!" cried Tots. "Here's his own woolly gaiter."

Then from Polly, who was the same age and size—

"You silly child! There's no end to woolly gaiters. Everything would fall out. Don't you think, nurse, you ought to get the chimney swept for Santa Claus to come down?"

"No, Miss Polly," said nurse gravely. "Santa Claus has so many chimneys to go down, you know, ours won't signify."

"Oh! he must be sooty!" says Tots. "If he brings me a doll, he must keep her face clean."

The girls from Brighton came home first. Girls have easy times, you know—so the boys say.

Edith had been learning to play the guitar.

"*I* wanted to bring home the hurdy-gurdy," said Fluffy, taking off her hat and her furs, after the first confusion of welcome and kisses.

"A hurdy-gurdy!" cried little Jess. "What fun! Do you learn to play the hurdy-gurdy at Miss Skeffington's?"

Imagine how indignant tall fair Edith was at such an idea. Did she go to school to Brighton, indeed, to learn the hurdy-gurdy?

"Hush!" said their mother gently, putting a finger to her lips, and looking at Fluffy. The little ones had never heard about "The Hurdy-gurdy Boy," and they were not to hear now.

Gerald arrived next day, glowing with health, and as happy as a king. Home for the holidays—why, it was worth being at school for three months to enjoy that first evening so much. They all talked together, you may be sure, of Brighton and the Applewich boys, and the pocket-money and the parties. The house was full of their voices. They scampered up and down stairs under the evergreens, and saw every corner of the dear old place — the kitchen smelling of plum cake, and the drawing-room prettier than ever, with a splendid fire and clusters of wax lights. Everywhere they went, except into the locked room where the Christmas-tree was. Gerald peeped through the keyhole, and excited his little sisters greatly by pretending to see the famous big fir-tree, with all the toys alive on its branches.

"Did you never hear that toys get alive at night, Tots? No. Well, look through the keyhole."

"I can't see anything," said Tots, while Polly struggled to get a view of the live toys.

"Well, you are only girls; perhaps you can't see," said Gerald, pretending to look through again. "Don't you hear the dolls thumping each other? Listen!—*Now* do you hear the animals out of the Noah's Ark walking about?"

No, they could hear nothing. Gerald seemed to have sharp ears.

The bells were chiming on Christmas Eve, when the children were allowed to rush into the room at last to see the lighted tree, and to get and give their presents.

Why, who was that, helping their mother—that pretty little dark-eyed girl, with a brown dress and a snow-white pinafore, and a very sweet smile? Gerald knew her in a moment.

"How are you, Gemma? I'm so glad—so very glad!" And he went, and took her by the hand.

"Mrs. Brierly said I was to come for the Christmas-tree. Please, Master Gerald, take Toto. I will give you Toto."

The younger children were screaming with delight, laughing at the antics of the monkey in the cage. They thought it was a present. And so it was—from Gemma to Gerald.

How changed she was for the better—neat and smiling, and radiantly happy! And you may be sure when the good things were divided from the brilliant Christmas-tree the little Italian girl was not forgotten. She sang for the children afterwards, and then they had supper, with Toto flying round the table, jumping now on the chair-backs and now on the sofa.

"Toto no fear; he never bite," said Gemma, when the little ones were frightened. And

between a nut here and a biscuit there, Toto's share of the supper became very large. At last Tipkins was outside with a cab to take the little girl home. She called the orphanage "home"; she had found one at last, like other children.

In the hall, as she went out wrapped in her warm cloak, and laden with presents, Gerald overtook her.

"It's very good of you about the monkey, but I can't take him, Gemma. I must not take Toto from you."

"They not like Toto at school," said Gemma; "he steal, he dance. No, no; I give you Toto. I come to see Toto again."

So on this arrangement only the monkey was accepted from Gemma. The Brierlys would keep it for her, and she was to come, on the pretext of seeing Toto.

It was on Christmas morning that Gerald very shyly made a request.

"Father, you know I was too bad to get the pony—but—but—will you ask Mr. Haines at the stables not to sell Sweep to anyone that would not be good to him? Poor Sweep!"

"I am sure he will be well treated," said Mr. Brierly, with a smile.

"And, father"—very shyly—"might I go—just once—to see him. I was very fond of Sweep—I was!"

Then Mr. Brierly smiled still more. "Come along now, my boy!"

"Now?"

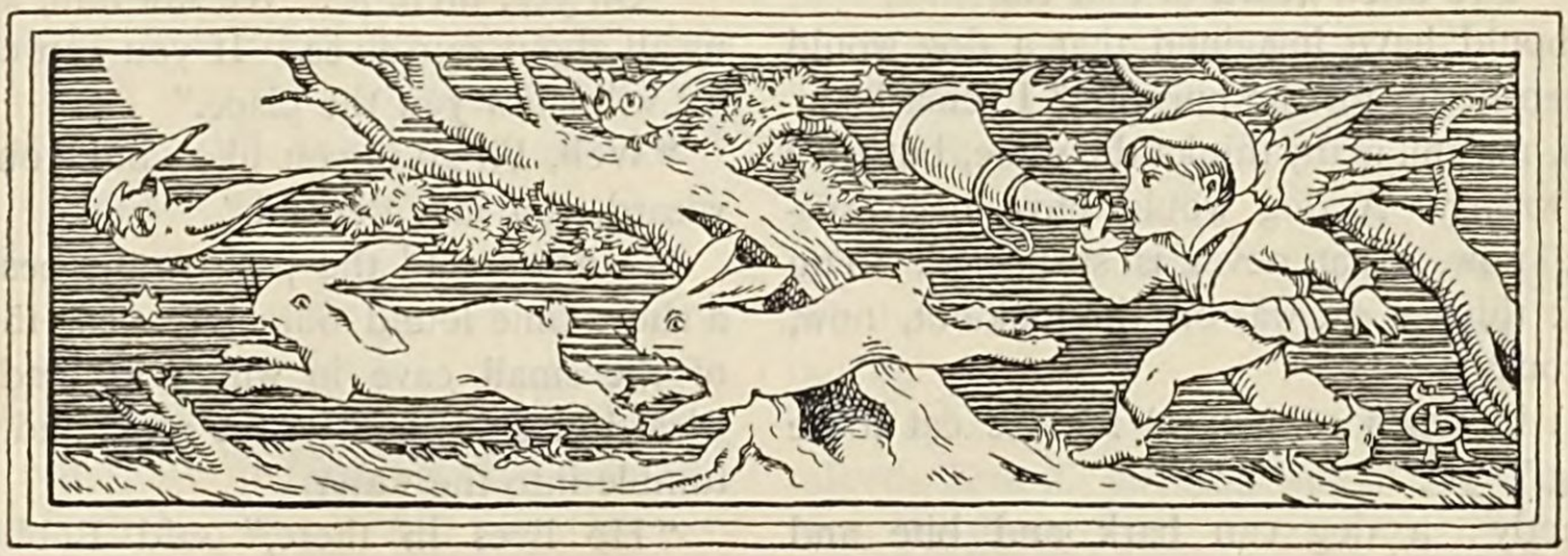
"Yes—to see the pony."

They went out there and then; it was very strange. Tipkins was in the back garden; he was at the old stable door.

"Why, father," cried Gerald, "there's the pony's head. You are *too good!* I have Sweep—after all. I say, father—wait till I go back to school again after this, and see what I shall do to thank you. Shan't I work *now*. Think of your giving me Sweep—after all!"

THE END.

BEHIND THE SUN.



THERE sat two hares beneath a tree,
When day was nearly done,
And wondered what there was to see
Behind that great red sun,

When, with a tread that none could hear,
A merry sprite went past,
And through his horn, into their ear,
He blew, oh, such a blast,

That up they sprang and off they flew,
As only hares *can* race;
The playful sprite, he followed too,
And ne'er was such a chase!

Away he blew, and on they went—
The sun sank in the west;
And, till their stock of breath was spent,
They never stopped to rest.

The sprite took wing to join the elves,
And vanished in the air;
The hares sat down to cool themselves,
And wonder where they were.

"This seems the land of night to me,
For there's the moon," cried one;
"I really think at last that we
Have got behind the sun!"

TEE-TO-TUM TALES.

By LUCY FARMER, *Author of "The Little Folks' Peep Show," "The Chronicles of Cardewe Manor," &c.*

VI.—THE SMUGGLERS' CAT.—A DISCOVERY.—HOME.

FOR a few days Master Bobby was very quiet and steady. His fright in the cavern had affected him considerably; but when he went out again as usual, he soon improved. The time for our return was approaching, and I was anxious to get him quite well before our return the following week.

One morning we met a coast-guard, and in course of conversation related our terrible adventure in the smugglers' cavern.

"Yes," said the man, "it might be dangerous unless you happen to know your way about, or have someone to warn you like the smugglers' cat."

"How do you mean?" asked Bobby. "Did a cat smuggle?"

"Not exactly; but she gave warning to her owners. I've often heard of that cat."

"I should have imagined that a dog would have been better for the purpose," I remarked.

"Yes, ma'am, many thinks the same, but they thinks wrong. A dog would have been suspected; now, a cat never is suspected. You wouldn't think a cat was on the look-out, now, would you?"

"No: it seems so natural for the cat to be watching."

"Exactly: a dog can bark and bite and frighten people, but then you know he is there, and avoid him. Now a cat is never noisy, and can move about unsuspected. This cat of which I am speaking would walk out with her tail up, and rub against you, and you'd not think she meant anything particular; but she did: she meant that a stranger was coming up!"

"But what became of the cat?" asked Bobby.

"She was shot—by accident, I believe. None of us wanted to harm her. A splendid animal she was—and no mistake! Such a tail she had! I never saw such a pussy-cat, missie. She was as active as a flash of lightning, and was out of sight as fast! She would sit on Dawson's roof, by the chimney, and when any of us came in sight she gave an alarm. One day I disguised myself on purpose, and went to see Dawson, but pussy knew me; she mewed and rubbed against her master till he noticed her, and suspected something."

"She *must* have been clever!" said Annie.

"Yes: people generally don't think much of cats; but they are wonderfully intelligent, and, if trained, will do things you wouldn't believe unless you saw them. A dog is more companionable, because he and his kind have been trained for generations. But cats can also be trained—if you take trouble."

When the coast-guard paused, Bobby nodded, and then a sudden idea occurred to him.

"Oh, coast-guard, have you ever seen the wizard in the cave below?"

"Wizard! No: there's no such a thing here."

"Oh yes, there is! We saw him, and he told us all about ourselves. If you can come down we will show you the place."

"Well, I'll go if you like; but you'll find no wizard, you may depend."

We descended the path to the beach, and in a short time found ourselves near the entrance of the small cave in which we had seen the wizard first perched on the rock, and afterwards tumble into the water.

"He lives in there," said Bobby. "Our cousins took us in."

"Yes, I daresay they did," replied the coast-guard. "That's right enough."

"I don't quite understand," whispered Annie to me. "Does the man mean that our cousins played us a trick?"

"I suspect so, Annie. Let us hear more."

"There *never* was *no* wizard," continued the coast-guard, greatly to Annie's horror—for Annie is fond of grammar. "Why, bless you! this cave's sometimes all awash at high water."

"But we saw the wizard: we heard him speak. He told us our dispositions and faults, and gave us all good advice," said Ethel quickly.

"Well, come in and search, if you like. There's no such person, I am certain."

Just as we were about to enter we perceived the cousins coming along the shore.

"Now," cried Bobby, "you will believe us! Here are our cousins who showed us the wizard."

"Oh, I know them young gentlemen. Was it them as took you in? Very well: I should say they are quite equal to that—and more!"

This we did not quite understand, but the young men soon joined us, and were at once appealed to about the wizard.

"The coast-guard says there is no wizard," cried Bobby. "But we saw him, didn't we, Ernest?"

"I suppose you saw the individual in the cave. I think he is there still," remarked Tom.

"You hear that?" cried Annie, turning to the coast-guard.

"Yes, missie, I hear it. Well, then, suppose we go in and find him—eh?"

The cousins were not particularly anxious to disturb him, but as we all insisted, they were compelled to go with us. We entered, but saw no one.

"Perhaps he was killed by his fall," said Ethel. "He fell into the pool over there."

"And there he is still, unless I am mistaken," said the coast-guard. "Poor fellow!" he added, with a smile.

By this time I had come to the conclusion that the cousins had indeed been playing a trick on us all. I had suspected them at first, but could not quite understand how they had accomplished their plans. All was now explained.

We went forward into the gloom, and in the pool of water found a figure made up very cleverly—an old guy, in fact—which did duty at a distance, in the cavern, for the wizard. This figure had at length tumbled down into the water, and had been left in the darkness; for few people ever entered the cavern, and those who did seldom penetrated far. The cousins had thus succeeded in fixing up the guy, but his supports gave way, and he fell, as we have seen.

There was a shout when the coast-guard fished the wizard out of the pool. His mask was all soft in pulp; and his clothes, ragged garments of no value. How anyone could have ever fancied him alive we were puzzled to decide—and I said so. "We were very stupid, young gentlemen, as you think, I daresay."

"Oh, Mrs. Farmer, surely you guessed it all. We thought you had discovered our little plot."

"Not entirely. But tell the children how you managed the conversation with the wizard."

"Yes, ma'am; you won't easily get a word out of this thing," said the coast-guard, as he pushed the "wizard" with his foot. But he jumped back very quickly when the wizard cried out—

"Don't do that again, or you'll be sorry!"

The children ran back, startled by this sudden remonstrance from the figure. The illusion was complete. The coast-guard stared in the greatest astonishment—speechless!

"Come, turn me over comfortably," continued the wizard. "Don't kick a man when he is down: lift me up, and I'll tell you something."

The cousins ran forward and put the figure on its feet. Then they propped it up, and it said politely—

"Thank you, gentlemen!"

"Well," said the coast-guard, "you have surprised me! That you have! This beats all! How do you do it?"

"It's simple enough. By throwing my voice in the direction of the figure—by ventriloquism."

"Ah! I see," exclaimed Bobby. "You really talked, Ernest, but you made the voice come from the figure."

"Exactly: just as you can hear the voice up in the roof. Listen."

We listened, and heard a man up there at work. He began to hammer something, and then called down, "Who's below? Is that Mrs. Farmer?"

We replied, and kept up quite a conversation until he said "good-day," and passed out in the distance.

"But how could the wizard tell our characters?" asked Annie. "You didn't know them yourself, Ernest."

"We made many inquiries, and guessed some things," replied the young man. "Annie,

and Bobby, and Ethel told us a good deal when they disputed with Mrs. Farmer."

Annie and Bobby looked at each other, and at Ethel. This explained the wizard's knowledge; and after the coast-guard had been treated to another display of Ernest's talents we quitted the cave, and turned towards home.

"Let us go and surprise Price and Bobby. Wouldn't he be astonished if we called out to him from the boat? But I say, Tom, what about the toys in the water? Did you and Ernest manage that too?"

Tom confessed that they had. They had purchased a few toys, and dropped them into the sea from the boat.

"Then," said I, "the toy ship is only pretence, after all?"

"Oh, no. The vessel *was* wrecked, but that was in the autumn, on the rocks yonder. But we supplied the toys the other day," said Tom, laughing.

"You took us all in nicely," I said. "We will play you a trick in return some day."

Unfortunately, we had no opportunity to do so, for when we reached our lodgings I found a letter for me from home, requiring us to return a week earlier than we had anticipated. So we were obliged to pack up and go home.

Thus our holiday ended. We had had a great deal of enjoyment; for, of course, I have only told you some of our expeditions and excursions. If I were to relate our daily adventures they would occupy too much space.

And so I must say "Good-bye."

THE END.

JACK FARQUHAR'S REASON.

A SCHOOL STORY.

SOME dozen boys stood in a group in a corner of the school-ground at Willoughby House. They were engaged in animated talk, led by Fred Westfield. "It's a horrid shame of the doctor refusing to let us go to the match," he was saying. "Why, there won't be a sixth form in any school that would see it."

"I can't understand it. He's always given us a half-holiday for the International Match until this year,' Harry Ward said. "He may have some reason that we don't know about."

"Nonsense! It's just the doctor's nastiness. He sometimes takes a turn like this. There's been no pleasing him lately. But I don't think we ought to stand this last bit of tyranny, boys."

"What do you propose to do, Fred?" Gordon Blair asked.

"Why, just take the holiday. If we all agree to go to the match on Thursday, what can the doctor do? It's not likely he'll punish the whole of the sixth very heavily. And I don't believe it'll even occur to him that we've gone to the match."

"Yes, that's the notion," exclaimed Dick Perrowne. "We'll take the law into our own hands for once, and risk it."

"Well, are you all agreed?" Fred asked.

"Agreed! agreed!" came from the rest.

Everyone consented to the plot, except one boy—Jack Farquhar, who remained silent.

"What's wrong with you, Jack? Aren't you going to join us?"

"No."

"Why?"

"I can't give you my reason, Fred."

"Oh, that's mighty fine, I daresay! If you can't stand in with the rest of your form, I think you are at least bound to give your reasons."

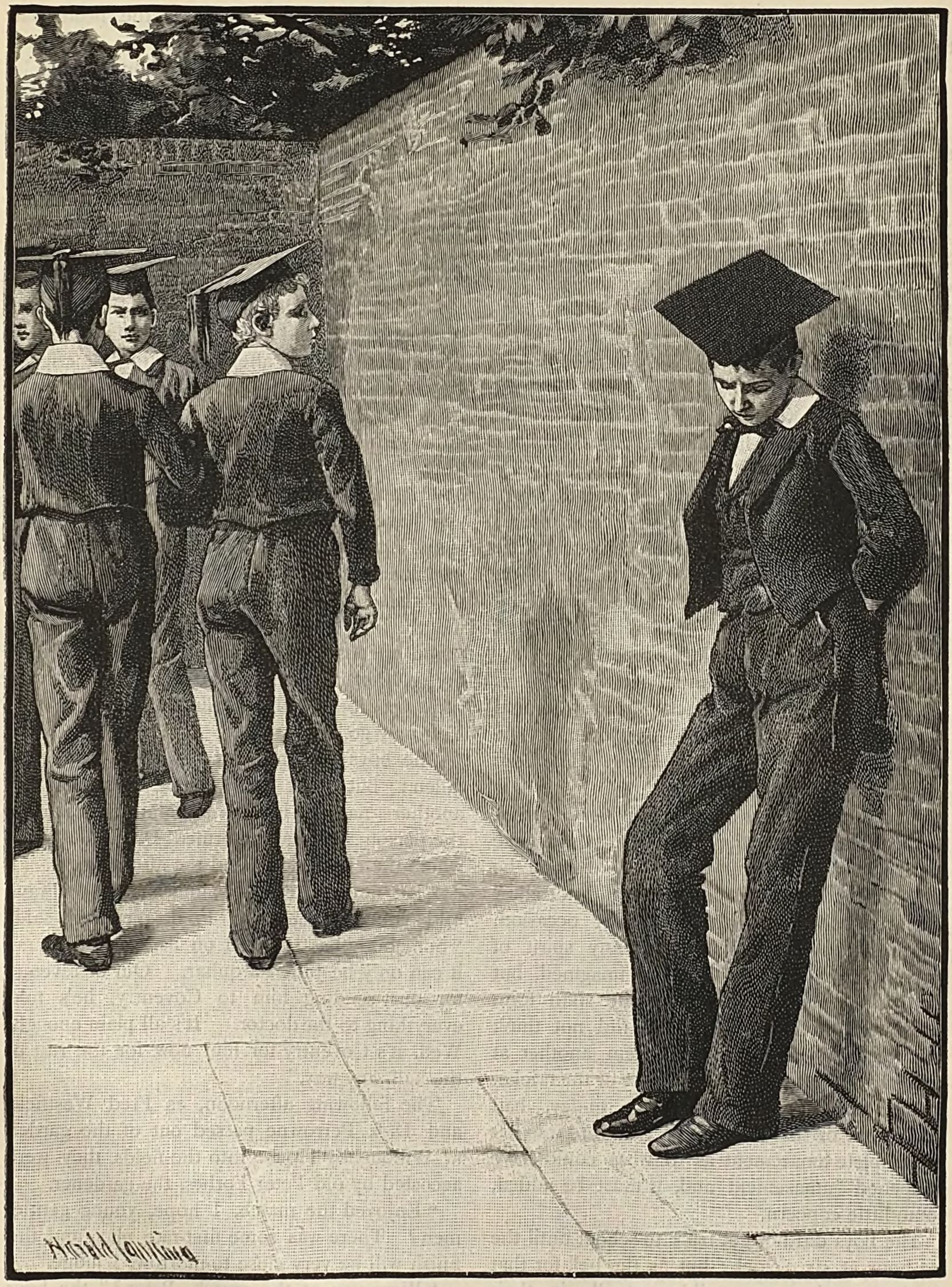
"Well, I can't!"

"You positively refuse?"

"I must."

"Well, boys," said Fred, turning to the rest, "I think there's only one way of treating a case like this. Here's one of us who won't join with the rest for the common good, so to speak. And then, to make the matter worse, he flatly refuses to give any reason for his action."

"Adding insult to injury, in fact," said Dick Perrowne, with a wave of his hand.



SENT TO COVENTRY. (*See p.* 386.)

"Just so. Well, what's the only remedy for that? I say it's Coventry."

"Coventry's the word!" exclaimed Dick.

"Coventry it is!" echoed the rest in chorus.

And so it was determined that Jack Farquhar should be sent to Coventry.

The above conversation took place on a Monday, and the great cricket match, New South Wales against Victoria, was to take place on the Thursday. Jack Farquhar passed a lonely enough time now. None of his classmates uttered a word to him, but passed him by with cold and contemptuous looks. It is useless to say that he bore it with heroic patience and fortitude. He was only a boy, and much like other boys, and he felt his schoolmates' conduct keenly; but although he knew the course they were taking towards himself was hasty and unjust, that did not make their action any easier to bear.

Willoughby House was a few miles distant from Sydney, where the match was to take place, and the boys reached the cricket ground by train. They had not much difficulty in escaping from school during the midday recess.

When Dr. Fenwick summoned his class at the usual hour, he was much surprised to find that there was no class to meet him. The other masters could explain nothing. The boys had kept their secret cleverly.

Fred Westfield was right. It never occurred to the doctor where the sixth form could have gone. It was a fortnight and more since he had informed the boys that he could not allow them a holiday on this particular occasion. He had not done this out of any spirit of tyranny or caprice, as the boys imagined, but simply because he had given the sixth form several half-holidays lately, and did not think he was justified in allowing them another at present. The whole circumstance of the cricket match, and of its taking place to-day, had passed out of his mind. He therefore was left in complete amazement as to what could have happened—amazement and, it must be added, some little concern.

The boys did not get back to school until the tea-hour, at six o'clock; but as the bell for that meal rang, they were all punctually in their places at the table. One and all scanned the doctor's face, where he sat at the head, but gathered nothing from it.

The meal was hardly over when the whole class was summoned into the doctor's studio. Doctor Fenwick began at once in a voice of great seriousness—

"Boys, I have been informed this afternoon of the gravest case of disobedience and insubordination that has ever occurred at Willoughby House. So far from thinking that any boys in my school could have so directly, and I may say heartlessly, disregarded my wishes and commands, I did not even connect your disappearance this afternoon with the cricket match, which I had expressly said I could not allow you to attend. I shall say no more, nor do I wish to hear any attempted explanations from any of you. I only discovered half an hour ago, and in the most chance way, where you have been this afternoon. Some punishment I must inflict, though it will be quite insufficient for the case. I must deprive the class of the Saturday half-holiday for a month. Up till to-day I have always reposed a considerable amount of confidence in my sixth form, but I am afraid it will be some little time before that feeling is re-established. You may go."

The boys left the room abashed and crestfallen; but with this feeling was mingled another—namely, indignation and anger against the person who had informed Dr. Fenwick of where the class had passed the afternoon.

"He never guessed it himself, as I always told you he wouldn't," Fred Westfield said. "Somebody has sneaked on us, and of course it can only be Jack Farquhar. Out of revenge for our sending him to Coventry, he's told everything to the doctor. It's all plain enough. Well, it's Coventry for him now for the rest of the half, any way."

The following afternoon, as Fred Westfield and Dick Perrowne passed out of the garden at Willoughby House into the fields, they were accosted by old Peter Forbes, the gardener.

"Enjoyed the match, I hope, young gentlemen? There was some first-rate play, and the finish will be very close to-morrow, I judge."

"Were you at the match, Peter?" the boys asked, in a good deal of surprise.

"To be sure. I saw you all; though, I daresay, you didn't see me. That was a grand innings of Kenyon's. I was telling the doctor about it yesterday afternoon, and saying it was a good lesson in cricket to you all."

And then the two boys understood all, and how Peter Forbes, who was himself an old cricketer, had let out the whole story to the doctor.

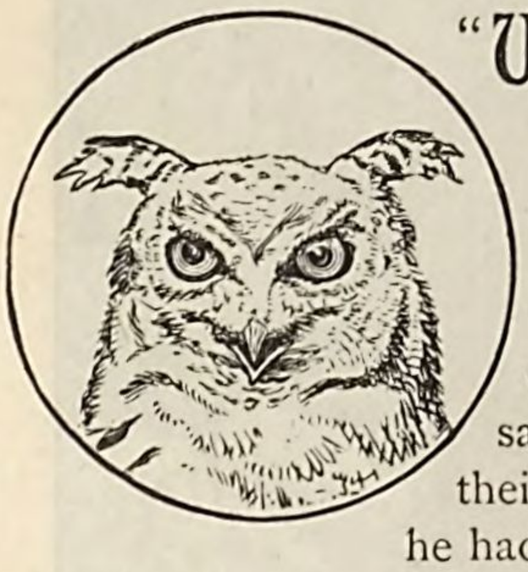
That night Fred Westfield and several others of the sixth form sought Jack Farquhar.

"We've not treated you very well, Jack," Fred began. "To own up at once, we all thought you had sneaked to the doctor about our going to the match yesterday, and we had determined to keep you in Coventry for the rest of the half. I don't know what your reason may have been for not joining with us in going, but that's past too, now. Anyway, we'd better all think no more about the matter, and shake hands on it."

Jack flushed as he extended his hand. "I'll tell you now, Fred, if you like, why I didn't join with you. I didn't like to speak out before the whole of the fellows the other day, but as you've been open with me, I'll be the same with you. None of you fellows know that I am at this school without paying any fees at all. My poor father lost all his money shortly before he died, three years ago. He and the doctor were old and very dear friends, and at my father's death he offered my mother to give me my schooling free. That's the whole story. I couldn't go against the doctor in the way you proposed, could I? It was merely a bit of disobedience in the rest of you, but it would have been a case of horrid ingratitude in me."

"None of us will ever say another word about this matter," said Fred Westfield. "We made a big mistake, Jack, but we understand each other now." ROBERT RICHARDSON.

WHAT FRITZ SAW.



"WHAT do the owls do?"

So said Fritz to himself, as he was lying in the long feathery grass at the foot of an old tower, where it was said some owls had built their nests. But though he had come there many days, he had never seen any owls—neither had he heard them. But often when he was going to bed he had heard strange cries and hootings, and his mother had said—

"There, you can hear the owls now, Fritz, but they never come out till it is your bed-time."

So it was clear the owls were there, and it was clear, too, that Fritz must stay out later in the evening if he wanted to see them. And one day he did—he stayed on and on amongst the grass by the old tower until he was so tired that he fell fast asleep.

And when he woke up again it was beginning to get dusk, and he saw in front of him the trunk of an old tree with a plank across it. And three owls sat at one end and three at the other, so that it was balanced and did not move.

At the upper end sat a horned owl and his son and daughter.

"I never heard of such a thing," said he, "never!"

And his son, turning up his eyes till only the whites could be seen, repeated "Never!"

The owls at the other end of the plank looked as if they did not know what was the matter, and asked—

"What is the matter?"

Then said the horned owl severely—

"The tower is mine; the mice are mine;
And the ivy that in and out doth twine
Is mine to shade me from prying eyes
And keep out the glare of the noonday skies.
You strange owls came and you've poached my game,
And you don't seem to feel the least bit of shame.
Without any doubt I must turn you all out,
So you may as well go without making a rout!"

To this the owls answered meekly—

"We did not know the tower was yours, and we've nowhere else to go."

"And it isn't his," murmured Fritz in the grass. "And you shan't go. I'll help you."

The horned owl looked down, but could not see anything.

In a short time he spoke again—

"Intruders, poachers, robbers of my peace, you must go. Go, I say to you, whilst the night lasts, and find a home elsewhere."

"Stay, stay, stay!" he shouted, springing up. "Don't mind the old tyrant. I'll help you."

But his sudden appearance so startled the meek owls that they rose up, and so overbalanced the plank, whereat the horned owl and his children went tumbling to the ground.

"Serves you right; pride has had a fall," cried Fritz. Then, looking round, he said, "Stay in the

"THREE OWLS SAT AT ONE END" (*p.* 387).

tower, my friends;" but the meek owls were no longer there. Then he turned his head back again, but now the horned owl had disappeared, and neither plank nor trunk of tree was to be seen.

"But we shall have no nest," said the owls.

"That is no affair of mine; you should have built one somewhere else. Go, go, go!"

Then the daughter of the meek owls suddenly turned and boldly faced the horned owl.

"We won't go. The tower is as much ours as yours; so are the mice. We will not go."

But the horned owl and his family hooted louder than ever, "Go, go, go!"

Fritz could bear it no longer.

"It's very strange," said Fritz, as he picked up his cap, "but certainly there are owls here, for I have seen them."

When he went home and told his mother all about it, she said—

"Fritz, you have been dreaming."

OUR SUNDAY AFTERNOONS.

MY JEWEL CASKET, AND SOME OF ITS WONDERFUL CONTENTS.

By MAGGIE SYMINGTON, *Author of "From Seed to Blossom," "The King's Command," etc.*

XII.—THE RUBY HEART.

THERE is in the crown of England a very famous ruby. It once belonged to that hero of your history books—the Black Prince. He received it from a King of Castile whose cause he had taken up—Don Pedro the Cruel. This beautiful stone is sometimes called "the ruby heart," because it is shaped somewhat like a heart.

If ever you see the crown of England, look for the ruby heart. You can hardly fail to see it, for it is placed in such a conspicuous position that it is likely to strike you at once.

It is the principal jewel in the crown, and this is the fact I want you all to remember to-day.

The crown of England is more beautiful, more strong, more famous than that of any other monarchy on earth, and its central jewel is a ruby heart.

Behind this fact there is a lovely truth. Oh! children, we hardly dare to believe what I must try to make clear to you all this afternoon.

If I were to tell you a story, I think it would help you better to look upon this light, so dazzling in its brightness.

There was once, in a far-off land, a noble lady. Her husband was a knight, and he had been called away to fight the battle of the Cross in the Holy Land. He had left everything he possessed in his lady's hands—his lands, his castle, his children, his servants, his old father and mother, together with such money and valuables as he could spare for their needs.

The terrors of parting in those days were very much greater than now, but the lady whose story I am going to tell you never thought of entreating her lord to stay at home. Her part was to encourage him to go forth when the faith they both professed called for his services. Her duty lay behind, his before; and so, dearly though they loved each other, they had to part, and God only knew whether they would ever meet again in this world. The chances were as ten to one, for what with perils abroad and perils at home, their meeting again seemed but too little likely to come to pass. Even at the best, years would pass before her lord's return might be looked for.

How sad the poor lady's heart felt when she saw him ride forth, I cannot tell you. The best part of it seemed to have gone with him, and what remained was chill and benumbed.

God sent the first bit of comfort to her through one of His own little messengers. Baby arms twined her neck, and rosy lips pressed her cheeks.

"Father will come back again," lisped the little one.

She clasped the child to her bosom, while the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Be strong, brave heart—be strong!" she murmured; then, with her child still in her arms, she rose and resolutely faced her duties. To comfort and sustain the old, to train and encourage the young, to order the large household, to direct her maidens, to look after the sick, to put the things her husband had left her to the uses he had directed: these were her tasks. Her hands were full enough, but her thoughts night and day followed him, always and in everything striving to carry out his commands and to fulfil his wishes.

So the busy days flew by, growing into weeks, months, then years; but there was no sign of her lord's return. Since he went she had not heard directly from him, though once or twice she had heard of him through others. News travelled slowly in those days of no railways, no telegraphs and telephones, no regular post of any kind, even; she had to trust and wait patiently.

And so the years went by. The old folk died and were buried, the children were children no longer, the lady's hair was growing grey with long watching and waiting. It was told her

that her lord must either be dead or faithless, because he had found no means of communicating with her. But she would not listen to such suggestions.

"My lord will come," she declared; "but only God knows when."

Her faithful heart told her that he could not be unfaithful. His silence of itself would never cause her to doubt him. When he came, she knew he would explain all.

More years passed, and then one day there arrived at the castle a pilgrim, a man who was bent and grey, and who leaned heavily on his pilgrim's staff.

A youth and a maiden saw him approach, and went to offer him an alms, as their mother had bidden them do to all strangers in need.

"God help you, poor man!" said the maiden.

"I pray thee, tarry and rest awhile," cried the youth.

The two took the staff from his trembling hands and helped him into the hall. As the three advanced in this way, the lady of the castle met them. She hesitated one moment, and the words on her tongue were—

"Whom have you there, children?"

But they never passed her lips. With one passionate cry she flung herself into the outstretched arms of the pilgrim, who held her there in a close embrace, to the astonishment of the youth and the maid.

The poor pilgrim was their own father, returned at last. The cry which broke from their mother's lips—"My lord! my dear lord!"—told them this; *they* could never have recognised the brave handsome man of their childish memory in this tottering figure. But love, such love as there was in their mother's heart, knew him through all the changes which time and trouble had effected.

The ruby heart is never at fault; it sees and recognises its Lord, wherever and however He comes.

We can never know God unless this ruby heart of love is in our casket. So, my darlings, though I am speaking of it last, it is really the first in importance of all the jewels in my casket. Without love in our hearts, we can neither perfectly know nor acceptably serve God.

Hear another little story.

Five green peas lay side by side in one little green pod. They were brothers and sisters, of course; but one of the five began to grow, and it soon became bigger than any of the others. It burst the pod at last, and rolled out into the world. It was so astonished to find the world so large that it would have returned to the pod again if it could have done so. The four little peas that were left had drawn the doors of their home together, and held them fast, in spite of their sister being outside.

"Let me in!" cried the ambitious little pea. "I have found the world bigger and wider than I thought it would be. I would rather come back, even if we are a little too closely packed."

The four selfish little peas lay still, and answered nothing; they would rather lose their sister than have their own comfort interfered with. Their own interest was their first consideration. What did it matter to them if their sister, who had been stupid enough to let herself grow beyond their powers of growing, were lonely and unhappy?

Pleasant it was inside the pod, cosy and warm; but being packed so closely, and lying so still, the four peas soon lost all desire to grow. They dried up instead, and rattled in the pod. No sound could reach them from the beautiful outside world now; they were yellow and shrivelled, and hard all through them—for they could not remain green for ever, you know.

But the other little pea, who had yielded to the desire to grow which had been put into her heart, just as it had into those of her brothers and sisters, what happened to it? For some time it lay sad and solitary, then the brown earth said, "Let me cover you."

"This is death," thought the little pea, but she gave herself up to the brown earth's embrace, and went down into darkness. It was warm and still down there, but there was no forgetfulness, as the little pea had feared. Before long she felt a strange sensation within her. It was a feeling of lightness and brightness, and strength and beauty. Something within her was pushing its way up towards the sun. Her whole being was enlarged; tendrils and leaves put themselves forth; her life was being increased a thousandfold. She bore hundreds of white-

winged flowers, and over these the butterflies flitted, and the bees hummed through all the long warm summer days.

The ruby heart glows like a flame within the casket, filling it with a soft rosy light. And this light cannot be hidden; its very nature is to reach outwards, piercing the dark. Whoever has this jewel will never be forgetful of the needs of others, never refuse to share with others the good things given to him. The love we give to God brings us sight and knowledge; the love we give to our friends brings growth and increase to our own souls.

Oh, dear children, covet before all things this ruby heart, the chief ornament in the crown of the King of kings.

WHEN SNOWS ARE FALLING.

Oh, purest flakes of silver snow,
That like the wings of angels go
So soft, so white, across the way!
A message to our hearts ye say.

In wintry hours from heaven ye fall,
To whisper, "God remembers all,
And covers up with mantle warm
The tiny seedlings from the storm."

And we, His little ones, must be
As gentle as these flakes we see;
For though so still, their power is great–
A crown of glory they create!

They rage not, nor in anger rend
The tree-tops, nor the branches bend;
But softly stealing one by one,
They gather till their work is done.

If tiny flakes can useful be,
Why, then, there's work for you and me!
We'll never think the weak and small
Can do no helpful thing at all.

We'll look around and try to bless
All others with our tenderness;
And though this winter cold may prove,
We'll warm up every heart with love.

And to the children's Lord we'll pray
To keep us kind and gentle aye;
For if we trust in Him, we know
He'll make us whiter than the snow.

M. S. Haycraft.

BIBLE EXERCISES.

61. In whose reign did Jeremiah begin to prophesy?

62. Where do we read that Job wept for those in trouble, and that he was grieved for the poor?

63. Where in the Psalms are we told that God will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly?

64. Where is it said that feet that are swift in running to mischief are amongst the things that God abhors?

65. Which of the prophets speak of the eagle's making its nest high up in the rocks?

66. Where does Jesus Christ assure us that it is not the will of His Father that even one of His little ones should perish?

67. What great man had eleven grandsons, all mentioned as dukes?

68. Who is spoken of as being the father of twelve princes, all named after their towns and castles?

69. Where does Jesus show us that a farthing given to God may be more in His sight than much gold and silver?

70. Where does God call Himself the Fountain of living waters?

71. Where is God called the Lord God Omnipotent?

72. What man, who was a Roman, was, with St. Paul, unlawfully beaten?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE EXERCISES.—49—60. (*See p.* 316.)

49. An omer full (Ex. xvi. 33, 34). 50. In St. Matt. v. 13. 51. In Deut. xxxii. 4. 52. In Ps. xcvi. 9. 53. In 1 St. Pet. iv. 16. 54. In Prov. xv. 17. 55. Agabus (Acts xxi. 10, 11). 56. Rehoboam (1 Kings xii. 1—19; 2 Chron. x.). 57. In Deut. viii. 15. 58. In Ex. xxx. 34, 35. 59. St. James (St. James i. 19). 60. Joshua (Ex. xvii. 8—13).

A MORNING VISIT.

LOOK at baby, Nellie dear,
Washed and dressed, and you still here—
Only just got out of bed—
Oh, you little sleepy head!

Say "Good-morning" to the pet;
Soon perhaps, but not just yet,
He will make as much ado,
Run about, and play like you!

He will soon begin to talk;
We must teach him how to walk—
Crawling first on hands and knees,
He will learn by slow degrees.

What a precious rogue is this,
Always ready for a kiss!
What a pretty rosy boy,
Full of life, and mother's joy

See his bright eyes opened wide,
Gazing round, from side to side,
First at me, and then at you,
Are they not a lovely blue?

Be quick, Nellie, and get dressed!
When we came we never guessed
You had stayed so long in bed—
What a little sleepy head!

J. R. EASTWOOD.

WHO KILLED THE CAT?

"CHRIS, get up—you're scorching yourself dreadfully."

"Don't care if I am," sleepily.

"Chris, don't you know that 'Don't-care' killed a cat?"

"Don't care if he did. Guess it was one that wanted killing!"

"You've got that wrong, anyhow, Miss Clever; it was 'Care killed a cat,'" observed Jack, Chris's elder brother; and Mab, who was toasting herself very luxuriously before the glowing nursery fire, yawned and remarked—

"Well, it was one of them did the deed, I know, and I'm sure it doesn't much matter which it was. There's my German exercise has to be done: that's what is troubling me; and, Jack, you'd better come too, and do some work before tea."

"I suppose I had, but it's a bore to leave this fire;" and Jack rose and stretched himself to an alarming extent.

Then he proceeded to poke Chris, who was lying on the hearthrug; but Chris was supremely comfortable, and merely gave a lazy grunt, without moving.

"Never mind that boy," said Mab, who, on the strength of being four years older than Chris, was inclined to give herself airs; "let him snooze if he likes; it will be tea-time in a quarter of an hour."

Another grunt from Chris was the only response made by that young gentleman; and Jack and Mab, who were devoted to each other, went out of the room arm-in-arm, grumbling a duet about the various difficulties of the noble German and Latin languages all the way downstairs.

Chris, however, remained where he was, and cuddled Dinah-duck, the nursery puss, who disliked boys as a general rule, but never had a disagreeable word to say to this particular one.

He was very fond of her, was Chris, and was never tired of singing a negro ditty into her ear, beginning—

"Oh, Dinah-duck, oh, Dinah-duck, when will you marry me?
I cannot eat my dinner and I cannot drink my tea."

The effect of the singing generally was that Dinah-duck went to sleep.

On this occasion she and Chris were delightfully cosy, for the real occupiers of the nursery

A MORNING VISIT. (*See p.* 392.)

were gone to a children's party, and so these two had the fire to themselves, without any horrid guard in front of it, which of course was necessary when there were babies toddling about.

Chris went on humming his little tune, and Dinah went on purring, and the fire crackled cheerfully, when all at once the door was pushed open, and in dashed a large black cat, Rodilardus by name, who belonged to the lady across the way.

His eyes literally blazed with excitement, and his tail seemed swollen to three times its usual size, and he shouted in a high falsetto voice—

"Come along! Be quick! they've caught him at last. Don't stop a second, or you'll miss the fun."

"What, what, what?" cried Chris, startled. "Who's caught? Do tell me quickly. Why, Dinah——!"

There was Dinah-duck, her whiskers quivering with excitement, bouncing out of the room behind the black cat.

"Dinah, Dinah!" called Chris, getting up from the hearthrug.

Dinah merely threw him a glance ver her shoulder.

"My dear, if you want to come, come; but don't stop to part your hair or count your money; and run as fast as if the bogies were after you. Cats are always *so* quick about everything, and I wouldn't miss the execution for a barrelful of cream. Come along!"

She was out of the room before the sentence was well finished, and Chris, his curiosity greatly aroused, tore after her.

The street-door was open, and he just caught a glimpse of a grey tail whisking jauntily through it.

What a sight met his eyes as he ran down the steps after the tail!

The whole street was literally alive with cats: with "grave old plodders and gay young friskers"—in fact, with every kind and description of puss.

And still they came — tearing down from the housetops, springing over the garden walls, jumping out of the windows, clambering down from the chimney-tops.

Chris noticed that every cat said to every other cat, "They've got him at last; hurrah! Come on, or we'll miss the fun!"

He had entirely lost sight of Dinah-duck, but as he ran along he asked a fine grey cat by his side—

"Whom have they caught, please?"

The grey cat looked at him scornfully before answering.

"Don't you know? Well I never! Why, *Care*, of course!"

Chris looked blank.

"*Care!*" said he; "what did *he* do, I should like to know?"

The grey cat whisked his tail, by way of expressing his supreme contempt for such an ignorant person.

"Where were you raised, I should like to know? Why, Care killed a cat! Never heard of that, eh? And it's one of the most important events in history."

A new light seemed suddenly to break over Chris.

"Care killed a cat! Care killed a cat!"

Where had he heard that before?

And now the rascal was going to be hanged for it!

How odd that he had never contemplated any sort of retribution overtaking Mr. Care for his crime!

They were in the square now, and Chris, looking over the backs of the assembled crowd of excited tabbies, tortoiseshells, whites, blacks, and greys, could see the scaffold quite distinctly, and the group surrounding it.

There was no mistaking the prisoner, and he looked as if he had repented killing that cat ever since the fatal day, for a more forlorn, miserable-looking object was certainly never seen.

He wore a shabby old coat, out at the elbows, and a hat that would have done credit to a scarecrow; his boots might have been new about the date of the First Crusade, and his collar looked as limp as himself, and about as grimy.

It made one feel quite low-spirited only to see the way in which he hung down his head, with its wisps of lank hair straggling from

beneath the battered rim of his hat. He made no effort whatever to struggle against his fate; and Chris caught sight of Dinah-duck enjoying herself very much, helping half a dozen other cats to fix the rope round the prisoner's neck.

Rodilardus was there too, gabbling something very fast out of a large black book; whatever it was, it seemed to have the effect of depressing the criminal still more—if such a thing were possible.

It was very funny to see how the cats who filled the square danced upon their hind-legs, and shook their right fore-paws at Care, shouting—"Who killed the cat? Who killed the cat? Yah!!"

Before justice had been done, however, a great disturbance arose in a distant part of the square.

At first Chris could not make out what it was about, but presently he discovered that another party of cats were bringing along a fresh prisoner; and amid the general hubbub he distinguished the words—

"Don't-care killed a cat! Don't-care killed a cat!"

"This is getting most exciting," thought Master Chris. "I wonder what they will do now?"

A perfect babel arose among the excited crowd when the new prisoner reached the scaffold.

"Care killed a cat!" "No, Don't-care did it!" "Hang Care!" "Hang Don't-care!" "Hang them both!" "Scratch him!" "Pull his whiskers!" "Stroke him the wrong way!" "Which of them did it?" "Where's the judge?" "Come, fetch the Jury!" "Miaow! Miaow!! Miaow!!!"

Chris looked with much curiosity at the new arrival, who seemed to take the commotion very calmly.

Don't-care was altogether a different being from his companion in trouble.

He wore a fine suit of clothes, and a brand-new hat placed slightly on one side; he twirled a little cane, and had an eye-glass in his eye and a flower in his coat.

The angry feline faces that scowled at him on every side did not appear to alarm Mr. Don't-care in the very slightest degree; no, he only smiled and began calmly brushing the dust off his coat.

Then he looked around him, caught sight of Chris, and, to the lad's intense surprise, actually winked at him, and beckoned with the jaunty little cane.

"Come, old fellow, just step up and help me out of this scrape; we are old acquaintances, you know. Tell these good people who killed old Mother Tabbyskins. Was it I or this gentleman on my right?" with a little bow in the direction of the scarecrow.

There was a general shout from all the cats after this speech; all eyes were fixed upon Chris, who felt considerably confused at being thus suddenly made the object of such universal attention.

He could see nothing but waving tails, and flashing green or yellow eyes, and bristling whiskers; while right away in the centre of the square was his Dinah, flourishing an encouraging paw, Dont-care twirling his cane cheerfully, and Care sorrowfully wiping his eyes with a large blue pocket-handkerchief.

"Who killed the cat?" came from a thousand throats.

Chris felt wildly excited; he was going to distinguish himself at last.

Standing on tip-toe, he shouted with all the strength of his lungs—

"Don't you hang the wrong man. I tell you Care killed the cat!"

* * * *

"Goodness me, Chris! where *have* you rolled to? And what have you been doing to Dinah? Squeezing her too hard, I should say. She looks offended."

Dinah beat a dignified retreat, and Chris sat up and rumpled his hair with both hands, although it certainly did *not* need that extra attention.

"Well, I've had the queerest dream, Mab. Was it 'Care killed a cat' or 'Don't-care?' You say *Care*. Well, that's all right, then; and they must have hanged him by this time, I guess."

"You're wandering in your mind," Mab remarked sagely; "you'd better come to tea, Christopher."

SHEILA.

DAISY'S BEST MONTH.

A STORY IN SIMPLE WORDS.

"MOTHER," said little Daisy as she wheeled her dolls' perambulator round the room, "I think December is the nicest month in the year."

Her mother laughed.

"Why, Daisy, that is just what you said in the summer; you told me then that July was the best month in the year—as it was so warm, and you could play out of doors all the time."

"DAISY . . . . WHEELED HER DOLLS' PERAMBULATOR."

"Yes, mother," said Daisy, stopping before her mother and looking very wise, "but I am older now, and I have been thinking a great deal about it, and I am quite sure now that December is the best month."

"And what is it makes you think so?"

"Well, first of all, mother, Christmas Day is in it, and we are all together, and enjoy ourselves and play at Blindman's Buff and Hunt the Slipper. And then, mother, we have plum pudding and mince pies, and Willy and Hugh come home for their holidays in December; and then my birthday is in December, and I have a party and lots of birthday presents. And then there is the Christmas-tree, and on Christmas Eve Santa Claus comes with more presents for us if we have been good."

"Well, you have made out a long list of pleasures, certainly," said her mother. "And what are you going to do on your birthday this year, Daisy?"

Daisy opened her large brown eyes.

"Tell me, mother; you know."

For Daisy's mother always planned something nice for her little girl, and Daisy knew quite well that it would be very nice this time.

"You will be six years old, Daisy," said her mother, "so I have invited six little friends to spend the afternoon with you. And Aunt Jessy is coming to help with the games."

"And you, too, mother?" said Daisy.

"Yes," said her mother, "I shall come and help you, and so will your father; and he is going to show you the new magic-lantern, with pictures from the story of Cinderella."

"And will there be the carriage, and the mice, and the rats that were turned into horses and coachmen and footmen?"

"Yes, and the fairy godmother, and Cinderella crying because she could not go to the ball."

"Oh, how lovely!" said Daisy; "how we shall all like it! I hope Annie and Lily will come."

"Yes, and Etta, and Rose, and Mary, and Eva; just six little girls because you are six years old."

Daisy thought for a moment, then she said—

"What a pity Willy and Hugh have not come from school! They would like to see Cinderella, though they are big boys."

"Oh, they can see Cinderella another time, when they have their party."

"So I shall have two parties, and the boys will only have one," said Daisy.

"Yes."

"I must get my dolls ready, too. And what else shall we do, mother?"

"What do you think of a game of snap-dragon after the lantern, just before supper?"

"Oh yes, that will be fun! Oh, mother, do you not think that December is the very best month in the year?"

G.

A STORY OF A FLOOD.

A PATHETIC story is associated with the little village of Süss, in the Lower Engadine, a wild bleak valley of Switzerland.

One day a flood, caused by the melting of many glaciers, came roaring down the valley.

The pastor's duties had taken him into the village, and his wife, fearing that he might be overtaken by the terrible flood, hurried down to the bridge that separated them from the village, just as her husband reached the opposite side. Without a thought of her own danger she called out—"Stay, Ulrich, I will come and help you to cross over!"

Just as she reached the middle pier the flood came rushing down the gorge in great force, and in a moment swept away the two side piers, leaving her standing alone on the tottering bridge.

The brave woman clasped her hands for a moment in prayer, and then those on the mountain-side perceived an expression pass over her face as though she had suddenly remembered something. They saw her hurriedly tear away the keys from her girdle and fling them ashore to her children, who had followed her down to the bridge; and they heard her voice sound above the roar of the rushing water—

"There's the keys, children!"

A second later and the devoted mother had disappeared down the ravine. Even in her own terrible danger she had recollected that the keys of the cupboard were in her girdle, and she knew that the children would want their evening meal. S.

FOUR ON AN ISLAND.

By L. T. MEADE, *Author of "A World of Girls," "Polly: a New-Fashioned Girl," &c. &c.*

CHAPTER XI.—WHITE CASTLE.

THE excitement on Rachel's and Tony's faces was seen also on those of the elder children. Even Ferdinand forgot his lameness, and springing to his feet caught up the old mariner's telescope, which happened to lie near.

"There's the sail!" shouted Rachel, "there! Not more than a mile off. Don't you see, Ferdinand? The ship has white sails—and there is smoke coming out of a funnel! I can see! oh, I can see!"

The little girl began to dance up and down in her wild joy.

"Is the ship coming towards us? And if so, how soon will it be here?" asked Tony, who at times could be immensely practical.

"Yes, *is* the ship coming towards us?" repeated Bell. "Oh! if only our red flag with its great white letters was flying now in the breeze, all would be well, for the people on board the ship would be certain to notice it. But as it is—oh, Fernie!—I fear, I greatly fear that vessel is outward bound."

"How foolish we were to think of *anything* before putting up our flag?" said Ferdinand. "Yes, Bell, I am sure you are right. That vessel—it is a large one, too—is not going to worry itself about a dangerous wild-looking place like poor White Feather Island. It is sailing fast, and has got steam on as well."

"Let's fire our gun as quickly as possible," said Bell. She did not wait to consult Ferdinand, but running quickly across the deck of the old ship, began to load the gun afresh.

The children let off several charges, but, alas! either the breeze was against them, or the vessel on which their longing eyes were fixed was really farther off than it appeared. It certainly never attempted to slacken its speed or to alter its course, and in less than an hour after they had first seen it Tony's and Rachel's sail had sunk beneath the horizon.

The four children looked at one another; they were every one of them brave, but the

sudden change from hope to despair made this as hard a moment as they had yet spent on White Feather Island. Even Ferdinand's lips trembled, and Bell had to turn her face away.

"Never mind," she tried to say cheerily; but the words died on her lips, and she did not even attempt to comfort Rachel, who had flung herself on the ground, and was sobbing piteously.

"This is a lesson to us," said Ferdinand, after a long pause; "and whatever happens, that flag shall wave above the top of Sugar-Loaf Hill to-morrow."

It is a common saying that we never know what we can do until we are tried. It certainly came true in the present instance. Under ordinary circumstances Fernie would have rested his ankle, allowed himself to be petted by his sister, and, in short, have taken up the life of an invalid. But in the circumstances which now really existed, he knew that it was quite impossible that he should sit still, with his hands before him. White Feather Island was undoubtedly out of the beaten track for vessels to pass: the children must not lose a chance like that of the night before again: it was all important that they should leave the island before the rainy season began, and Ferdinand knew that Bell's red flag, which was the only chance of attracting attention to the ugly and barren little island, must be put up at any cost.

Accordingly, the next morning Fernie and the others walked to the top of the slippery mountain which they had named Sugar-Loaf Hill. A plantation of tall straight trees was not very far off; these trees were of a species of pine, and were admirably adapted for the purpose to which Ferdinand intended to apply one of them. He looked all round, and then suddenly turned to Bell, with his eyes sparkling.

"What a stupid fellow I was!" he said. "You know, Bell, what trouble Tony and I have taken with our pole? We have cut it and hacked it, and I intended to dig a deep trench, and plant it firmly on the very top of Sugar-Loaf Hill."

"Well, and don't you intend to do it, Ferdinand?" asked Bell, somewhat impatiently. "I thought we had all come up here for the express purpose."

"We'll do better than that," said Ferdinand, with a joyful laugh. "Bell, my dear, it would be impossible for children like us to plant any pole firmly enough in the ground to stand one of the awful storms which visit White Feather Island. Now, do you see that king of all the pine-trees standing there alone, some twenty or thirty feet away from the other trees? He is not quite on the top of the Sugar-Loaf, but to all intents and purposes he will look so to people out at sea. Now I propose that we make this old monarch our flag-staff. He's rooted firmly enough, and he's immensely tall. We'll lop off all his branches, poor old fellow, and he shall do a good deed, a noble deed, after his centuries of life. The latter end of the old king shall be his best. What do you say to my notion, Bell?"

Isabel considered it in her usual grave fashion.

"Who is to lop off the branches?" she said, after a pause.

"Well, I'm afraid you must do that. I don't think I could climb a tree with this lame ankle."

"What a good thing that I was always as much boy as girl!" said Bell, with a quiet smile. "Oh dear, oh dear! my mistress at the old school in England used to prophesy all kinds of bad things of me because I *would* climb trees; and now—if poor Miss Hodges could only see! Well, here goes! Give me the hatchet, please, Tony. I'm going to swarm up the old king."

The chopping and preparing of this new flag-staff was very hard work, but patience and perseverance worked wonders, and before the day was over the children saw their beautiful flag unfurl itself slowly, and float out on the soft summer breeze. They had brought food with them to the Sugar-Loaf, and now sat down at the foot of the flag-staff to enjoy a hearty meal.

When they had finished, Ferdinand told the younger children of his plan for building a house, to be in readiness for the rainy season.

"And now I have a further thought," he added. "It is most important that one or other of us should keep a constant look-out, within sight of the flag and on top of the Sugar-Loaf. It will be, therefore, a great matter to have our house near. There are no better trees on the island than this plantation of straight firs, and

what I propose is that we build our house in the valley, just below the Sugar-Loaf. You see that stream of water? We must have water close to us; and that rock just at the back will, I think, defy even the storms which come to White Feather Island."

Of course Ferdinand's plan aroused a most lively discussion. Tony rolled head over heels down the slippery mount to examine for himself the site for the children's new home; Mungo followed his example; and Rachel, who had scarcely recovered yet from her disappointment of the evening before, looked once more cheerful and interested.

"We will begin the house to-morrow," said Ferdinand. "I don't think we could have a better spot to build it on; and now surely it is time for us to go back to the old ship."

On their way back Mungo suddenly pricked up his ears, erected his tail, and rushing wildly in front of his party, ran up a narrow ravine, and was lost to view.

"What can be the matter with the dog?" exclaimed Rachel. "Anyone would suppose he was giving chase to a rabbit. Have you seen any rabbits on the island, Fernie?"

"No," said Ferdinand. "But listen; do you hear that noise? He is certainly wrestling with some creature, and getting the worst of it too, I expect. Oh dear! what a nuisance my lame ankle is! Bell, as usual you must take my place. *Do* run and see what is up."

"Give me the gun," said Bell. She seized it out of her brother's hand, and rushed up the ravine, followed by Tony and Rachel. The children had scarcely turned the corner when they came upon the object of Mungo's frantic excitement. Bell stopped short, and suddenly burst out laughing.

"There is no need for my formidable gun here," she exclaimed. "Run back, Rachel, and put poor Fernie out of his misery. Oh, Mungo, what a bad, bad, deceitful dog you are!"

Mungo was standing with one paw raised in the air; the other front paw was firmly pressed upon a terrified and very young kid, which he had caught sight of and brought to the ground. The little animal was not hurt, but terror was causing it to utter plaintive cries—something like those of a little baby—while its lovely full dark eyes rolled piteously round in search of its mother.

"Oh, you darling!" exclaimed Bell. "Why, you can't be a week old, you little dear! and aren't you tender and pretty? Yes, Mungo, I'll forgive you, as you haven't hurt this sweet pet. And where's your mother, pretty little Nan? Why, this is a regular Robinson Crusoe find! Well, Nan, I shall carry you home, and so follow in the steps of poor old Robinson. Now, if only your mother will follow, we must try to keep her captive, and then we can have milk for tea again. Oh, how I have pined for milk to put into my tea!"

The children were all greatly excited over this new treasure, and Ferdinand said that they should collect a bed of grass for the little creature, and then put a strong fence round it, so that it should be safe from the dangerous land-crabs, and yet be within sight and hearing should its mother come after it.

The making of the fence occupied the children for the remainder of the evening; a great coil of wire fencing, which, rusty enough, but still quite whole, had been discovered in the old ship, was now found, and Nan was put into her new home before nightfall. Rachel thought that someone should sit up with her, but this Ferdinand would not hear of.

"The mother won't come near if she sees us," he replied. "No; we must all go to bed, like sensible people, and trust to little Nan's pretty coaxing ways to give us a nice cup of foaming milk for breakfast."

"I feel so excited that I don't think I shall sleep a wink," replied Rachel.

Fortunately for her and her companions, this fear was unfounded, for the little girl's head scarcely touched her pillow before she was in the land of dreams.

In the morning Mungo's furious barking aroused the children, who rushed on deck, to see a very fierce-looking goat butting with all its might against the wire of Nan's prison.

"She has come! the mother has come! We'll have milk for breakfast!" shouted Tony, his voice quite shaking with eagerness.

"The thing now is, to secure the old goat," said Ferdinand. "I shall throw a lasso over her head. Tony, give me that coil of rope."

Tony obeyed; and a moment or two later Ferdinand's practised hand had secured the mother-goat. She kicked and struggled furiously, but was finally dragged into the pen by the side of her rejoiced baby.

"It is all very fine," said Bell half an hour later. "We all want milk for breakfast, and I do not think that I am a very nervous girl, but I own I am a little afraid of Mrs. Nanny-goat's kicks and struggles."

"We won't milk her until the evening," said Ferdinand. "She will be tamer then, particularly if we feed her daintily with some nice juicy grass and some tufts of that wild furze. There, I think her prison is strong enough; and how happy little Miss Nan looks already! Now, Bell, breakfast, if you please, for we must be off immediately after to begin our winter house."

Bell's breakfast on this morning consisted of fish delicately fried, a great dish of scrambled turtles' eggs, and some cakes, fresh made and done to a turn, which she had contrived to make out of the beans which grew in abundance all over the island, and which she had ground down to a coarse flour. These cakes were certainly not the most delicate, but hungry people could not afford to choose.

After breakfast the children packed a basket with cold provisions and several bunches of sweet wild grapes, and set off for the site of the house. When they reached it, the first thing they did was to put up a rude tent or awning, and then Ferdinand carefully marked out his ground floor.

"Do you see those four pine-trees?" he said. "See how they grow, almost in a square. I shall make them the four corners of our house. They are quite strong enough to resist the winter storms; and now, Tony, come along and help me, for we must cut down many trees, and saw them into even lengths to fill in the spaces between our pillars."

The work now began in earnest. The children were too busy to talk much, too busy to be unhappy, or to have room for fears. Ferdinand knew that in less than two months from now the rainy season, with its terrible storms and floods, would be on them; he knew, too, that the task they had set themselves was a heavy one, and he determined that not an hour should be lost in getting it finished. Cutting down fir-trees was slow work, and although the children worked from morning to night, it seemed to Rachel when they went home each evening that they had done little or nothing. Bell saw the tired look on the child's face, and after the fourth day of hard work she said to Ferdinand—

"Rachel and Tony must not work after dinner; they must rest, and play with Mungo, or they will be ill."

"And you, Bell?" said her brother. "Are you never supposed to be tired?"

"I am older," she said, with the faintest of sighs, which she was unconscious had escaped her.

Tony and Rachel much enjoyed their hours of play and rest, and the house, after the posts were cut down and measured off to the right lengths, made rapid progress. Between each post which Ferdinand planted firmly in the ground he wove long branches of willow, so that the whole when finished looked like a solid wall. The back of the house was ten feet high, the front between six and seven; it was fourteen feet long, and ten wide. Rachel declared that she had seldom seen such a lovely home.

There were two windows in the house. These had been carried bodily out of the old ship, and Ferdinand felt himself a very proud and happy fellow when he first looked out of the windows of the home he had made himself.

But it would take a very long time to tell all about the building of this wonderful house: how little by little it got slowly finished; how a chimney was made out of an iron funnel; how Ferdinand made a barrow by which they could move an iron stove and other heavy things from the ship; how he pulled up the deck to make flooring for the new house; and how, bit by bit, all the useful parts of the old ship were removed to White Castle, which was the name the children gave to their new abode.

The inside of the house was made gay and bright with curtains of some of the crimson cloth which formed the great flag; and at last, on a certain day when the sun shone brightly, and the air felt as balmy and warm as it had ever done, the children carried their final possessions to their castle, and bade "good-bye" to the friendly old ship.

HELP AT HAND. (*See p.* 397.)

"You are a dear old thing," said Bell, stooping down and kissing the worm-eaten rafters. "You have been our best friend on this desolate island, and I don't know what we should have done without you; but all the same, it is not safe to trust you in a storm; you can't help the waves dashing right over us, and as Fernie says the rainy weather is not far off, we must leave you, kind old ship, and get into some place of safety."

"Come along, Bell, now," said Ferdinand. "I am sure the rainy season is close at hand; but we are safe for to-night."

The children looked most important as they walked from the ship to White Castle. Ferdinand, guiding a heavily-laden barrow, led the way. The barrow contained the children's beds, their saucepans, pots and pans, and every scrap of crockery which they could collect out of the ship. Following the well-laden barrow came Rachel and Tony, carrying between them a basket filled with fresh fish, some turtles' eggs, and two plump but rather tasteless white birds. Bell walked last, leading Mrs. Nanny-goat by a chain; little Nan trotted by her mother's side, and Mungo, with a very sharp and wary look on his face, darted here, there, and everywhere. Mungo was most rude in his manners to little Nan; he thought that she owed all the good things of life which had lately fallen to her share to him, and he felt that she was by no means grateful enough.

When the children paused on the threshold of the home which they had made with their own hands, the sight which met their eyes was a very pleasant one. Through the round port-hole windows the setting sun was sending some cheerful rays; the old stove, polished to dazzling brightness, contained a cheery and welcome fire. On the floor of the house was laid a rough carpet, which had once covered the captain's cabin. The round table in the centre of the floor was made gay with some more of the famous crimson cloth; a few chairs stood against the wall.

"It's the very sweetest house in the world," said Rachel. "Don't I just long to sleep here! Bell, let me help you to put the beds straight."

After supper, when Tony and Rachel, tired out with their day's labours, were sleeping soundly, Bell and her brother sat for a time by the fire in their little stove.

"Well, Ferdinand," she said, "I think you ought to be a proud fellow. I only wish our father could see you to-night!"

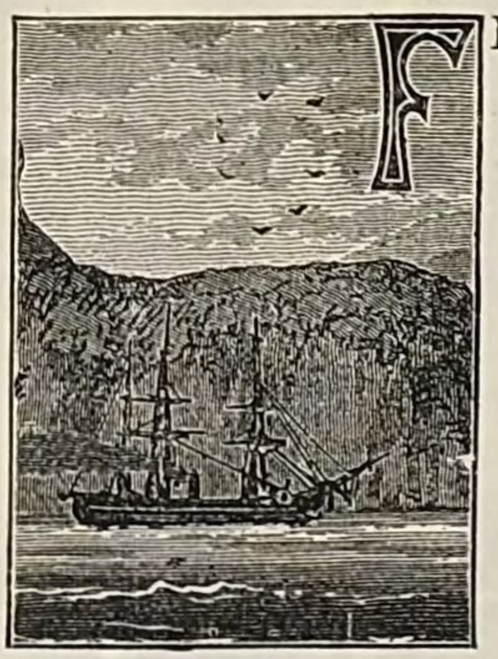
"Don't speak of him, Bell," said Ferdinand. "The bare mention of his name makes me feel quite choky lately. Somehow, Bell, I am not half as sure as I was at first of our ever getting away from this place."

"Courage!" she answered, laying her hand upon his arm.

He took the little brown hand which had proved itself so clever and useful, and gave it a loving squeeze.

"I am determined not to be gloomy," said Isabel: "just now, too, when we have the roof of our own house over our heads! Fernie, the next things we must see about are clothes. Look at my boots—my feet are peeping through them."

CHAPTER XII.—THE *MERRY, MERRY ANN.*



FERDINAND'S fears with regard to the near approach of the rainy season were not immediately fulfilled. Fine day followed fine day, and Rachel, as she looked at the clear blue of the sky, often wondered if clouds could ever again come across it. Ferdinand, however, did not fail to assure her that the evil and dreaded time could not be far distant. "There will be no blue in those skies soon," he said. "The rain will fall in torrents, and with only such brief intervals of fine weather as will just enable me to go out to bring in necessary food; and in the meantime we must lay in all the stores we can, and take every precaution to keep our little house tight and snug."

In addition to White Castle, Ferdinand had built a stout strong shed. This shed leant against the house, and helped to strengthen it. The sides of the shed were secured with some planks which the children had brought away from the old ship, and the front was made compact and strong with wire fencing.

In this shed Mrs. Nanny and her daughter

lived, and at one end of it the children stored away a great quantity of fuel, some bushels of dried beans, a good supply of turtles' eggs, and some fish which they had managed to dry in the sun. They also dried grapes in the fashion of the far-famed Robinson Crusoe, and with these little stores they now faced as bravely as they could that season of tempest and water which lay before them.

"I will dig a deep trench round the house," said Ferdinand: "it will help to drain off the water, and so keep us drier; and oh, Bell! I think that huge roll of macintosh we found in the ship will cover our roof from end to end if we can only manage to hoist it up."

"We can certainly do that," replied Bell, in her cheerful way. "And then, Fernie, there is one thing more. Either you or I will have to shoot a few goats, for somehow or other we *must* get more clothes. We must shoot the goats, and use their skins for clothing, and dry their flesh to add to our stores of food."

"We are going to have very unpleasant things to eat in the rainy season," remarked Rachel. "I do hope the horrid time will soon come, and soon pass; I am tired of hearing about it."

"I must say one thing," answered Ferdinand—and he turned round in a somewhat angry way, so that Rachel fell back with a mock exclamation of alarm—"when the rainy season comes—and come it will, perhaps to-morrow, perhaps the next day—we must put on all our armour to meet it. It is a good tough kind of foe, I can tell you, and we have got to be prepared for it."

"Oh, Fernie, are you going to read us a lecture?"

"Stuff, Rachel! You are old enough now to know me better, but I do repeat that we must put on our armour. We must get strong in our hearts to meet the dismal rains; we must be specially good-tempered, specially cheerful; and as to grumbling or talking about anything being horrid, such goings-on will not be listened to for a moment."

With these words Ferdinand shouldered his axe, and went off to the woods to cut down more fuel.

The next few days were bright, and Bell had the satisfaction of getting her goats killed, but the process of skinning them proved to be far more serious and difficult than the children had any idea of, and in the end the dreaded rains began long before the skins were cured or even the meat dried.

"How I wish we had the 'Swiss Family Robinson' here now!" said Bell. "That delicious book would tell us exactly how the thing is properly done; whereas now—" she sighed, and looked down at her almost shoeless feet.

The weather broke with a storm which was nearly as frightful as that which the children had gone through on the night when they first took possession of the ship. This terrible storm, too, came on at night, and the poor little fugitives sat huddled together in their insecure wooden house, and trembled for the results. They were high now, however, out of any reach of the sea, and Ferdinand's wisdom in having chosen four stout living trees for the corners of his house was well rewarded. The poor little dwelling rocked and creaked, and groaned and swayed, but not a drop of rain came through the thick tarpaulin which covered the roof, and not a beam of wood was displaced from the walls.

In the morning the children looked out on a truly watery world, and Ferdinand told the others that the rainy season had now begun.

Perhaps a wet day is never the most cheerful of companions. People like to light fires, and draw curtains, and make themselves very snug with cheerful books, and work and play in the wet weather which comes to most of us; but wet weather at home in England, and the rainy season in a small tropical island are widely different matters, and Ferdinand was right when he said they must put on all their armour.

It is a curious fact that no one can quite account for, but nevertheless is proved to be true many times in most of our lives, that misfortunes never come singly: they are fond of arriving at most houses in groups; and very unwelcome visitors they are. Now, the rainy season was quite bad enough, and it was quite sufficiently dreadful to have ill-fitting and worn-out clothes, and to spend all one's time in a tiny wooden house which was very damp and not very light, without the crowning

PULL AWAY!

—☼—

WHERE the lights glow
Bright in the tree,
Gay crackers grow—
Pull one with me!

First, hold it tight—
Firmer, I say;
Pull with your might—
Once, twice—away!

What shall we get
Out of this one?
No one knows yet—
That's half the fun!

trial of all coming in poor Bell getting seriously ill. No one quite knew how this came about. Perhaps she was over-tired, perhaps she took a chill when she rushed out in a brief interval of sunshine to try and collect some more turtles' eggs. Be that as it may, she awoke one morning with a burning, throbbing brow, with dry and thirsty lips, and with aching, gnawing pains in every limb.

When she raised her head, she saw queer circles and sparks of fire in the air. The tiny little wooden hut seemed to swim and sway like the cabin of a ship in a storm. Bell had to fling her head weariedly back again on her pillow, and own that something had come which was too mighty even for her brave resolute spirit to fight against. Bell was ill, very ill, and immediately it seemed as if everything must go wrong in this humble little household.

No one quite knew how strong Isabel was, how brave, how clever, how motherly, until she was no longer of use to apply to in every danger, to rush to in each care or trouble. Ferdinand was a capital fellow in his way, but he was not quite so clever as Bell; and now that she was very ill the other three poor children felt simply at their wits' ends.

"I'll be all right to-morrow, darling," said the sick girl, touching Ferdinand's arm for a moment with her burning hand. "There is plenty of food for everyone to-day; and if I lie very quiet, this headache must go."

But the headache did not go, and soon Bell found it impossible to lie quiet, for the mighty grip of fever was on her, and she tossed wildly from side to side, seeking for coolness and rest, and freedom from burning ceaseless thirst.

Days of soaking rain had made the wooden hut anything but a wholesome dwelling, and Ferdinand was afraid that Rachel and Tony would both also catch the fever. He did all he could to prevent this, sending them out for a brisk walk whenever the weather was fine enough, and dosing not only Bell, but his little cousins and himself, with some precious quinine which he had found in the captain's medicine chest.

But whether the quinine had lost some of its power from age, or whether Bell was too seriously ill to be benefited by such a simple remedy, no one could say; it is certain, however, that as the weary days and nights followed each other she grew worse and worse, until at last there came a dreadful morning when Ferdinand wondered if Bell was going to die.

Curious to relate, the sun shone again that morning. It was a poor watery kind of sunshine, and there were banks of heavy clouds everywhere. But still the sun did peep in through the queer little port-hole windows, and Ferdinand instantly roused Tony and Rachel, and told them to run to the shore to see if they could find one or two fresh turtles' eggs.

When they were gone, he opened the door of the house to let in all he could of the warm sunshine; he pulled the bed on which the sick girl lay a little nearer to the door; and when she feebly opened her eyes, he gave her a cup of goat's milk, and, stooping down, kissed her forehead.

Ferdinand had not the most remote idea when he did this that the tears with which his poor young heart was bursting had, one or two of them, managed to get into his eyes, and that one great tear would splash on Bell's pale cheek. That tear roused her a great deal more than even the good goat's milk. A faint dawn of returning colour came into her lips, and her eyes looked lovingly at Ferdinand.

"Do you think I am going to die, Fernie?" she asked in a whisper.

"I—I—don't know, Bell."

Bell looked straight back at her brother. Her eyes were as honest as her brave soul. They read in a glance what Ferdinand wanted to hide.

"Fernie," she said, still in the same low, very weak voice, "I don't think I am going to die. I know I am ill enough to die, but somehow I think I shall get well, for you all want me badly. Of course," she added, after another very long pause, "I may be wrong, and—I shouldn't be frightened—I think I'm—ready."

"I know you are, dear Bell. But oh! if only you were out of this—if the rainy season were over, and we were even back in the ship! This awful damp weather and damp house are killing you."

Bell was much too tired to say any more. Her fingers lay motionless in Ferdinand's.

Presently her eyes closed, and she dropped asleep.

Ferdinand went to the door of the hut to look for Rachel and Tony. He wanted to try to catch some fish for Bell's dinner, but he could not leave her until the children returned.

"If I only could think of something to keep up her strength," he murmured. "I wonder if she is right in what she says: that we want her too badly for her to die. Dear Bell! of course she's as ready as a girl could be. Oh! what shall we do if we have to stay on this dreadful lonely island without her?"

The sun was really wonderfully bright that morning, and the black clouds, instead of gathering together and preparing to pour their contents in great sheets of water on the soaked ground, rolled farther and wider apart, and as Ferdinand looked up the deep blue of the sky was reflected in his blue eyes.

"I do think that sunshine is a good sign," he muttered. "But I wish Tony and Rachel would come back. It is thoughtless of them to stay out such a long time, for they know I cannot leave Bell."

Ferdinand had scarcely expressed these last thoughts when, with a little dash and breathless run, Tony reached his side.

"We couldn't find any turtles' eggs," he said; "and Rachel has gone up to the top of the Sugar-Loaf—and—I just ran round to let you know, Fernie."

Ferdinand grasped the little boy by one of his arms.

"Look here," he said: "can you be *very* quiet?"

"Why, of course."

"Come in, then, and sit by Bell. Sit on this chair by her bedside; she is asleep, so you must not move. Keep the door open as long as the sun shines, and she is not cold. When she wakes, give her some sips out of this cup."

"Where are you going, Fernie?"

"Up to see Rachel first—she must not stay by herself on the top of the Sugar-Loaf—and then to try and catch some fish."

Tony went at once into the little house, and Ferdinand, followed by Mungo, ran up the steep sides of the Sugar-Loaf with bounding steps. The brief return of the sun had given him hope, and Bell's words had cheered him.

The day kept on improving, and the fierce gusts of wind which usually accompanied the wild torrents of rain had died to an almost calm. Ferdinand saw several land-crabs crawling about in their hideous ungainly fashion.

"Poor, frightened little brutes!" he muttered; "they think summer has returned. What a sell the torrents of rain which are sure to fall to-night will be to them."

He reached the top of the Sugar-Loaf, to see Rachel leaning sadly against the flagstaff.

"Come along, Rachie," he shouted to her. "You shall run with me down to the beach, and help me to catch some fish for Bell's dinner. Why, what's the matter? What are you crying about?"

"There's a ship over there," she answered—"a ship far out there," and she pointed in the direction of the horizon. "I have been watching it for a long time, and it is not taking the least notice of Bell's beautiful red flag."

"A ship! Let me look at it," answered Ferdinand. His voice quite shook with fresh life and hope.

"Yes, there she is," he continued, "the beautiful darling thing! Oh, Rachie, she must see us—she shall! Wait here, and I will fetch the gun. Oh! Rachel, the good ship must come and deliver us."

Ferdinand rushed down the slope; it scarcely took him three minutes to reach the wooden house. His heart was beating wildly; his head felt giddy, his eyes swam. What *did* a ship in those seas at this time of year mean? The hope which filled him was almost painful.

He reached the little house, to see Bell sleeping quietly, and Tony sitting motionless by her side. He held up a warning finger to Tony, crept into the hut on tip-toe, secured the old gun and the captain's spy-glass, and rushed up the Sugar-Loaf again. Rachel came to meet him with dancing eyes. His hope had infected her.

"I don't *think* the ship is farther off," she said, her voice scarcely above a whisper. "At least, I'm not sure. I can't quite make out what it is doing. Sometimes it seems to go far away, sometimes to get near. Oh, Ferdi-

nand! what shall we do if it goes away like the other ship?"

"It won't," said Ferdinand, "I feel that it won't."

He adjusted the telescope, and took a long outward look.

"The ship is a steamer," he said, "and she is tacking—I believe she sees our flag, and is making for White Island. Yes, I am almost certain of it. She takes long tacks, and each time gets a good bit nearer."

"I can see her smoke quite plainly now," said Rachel.

"Yes, she is not a very large ship, and she is certainly coming in this direction, with wind and tide both against her. There must be a reason for that. I should not be a bit surprised if father was on board, and he was coming to look for us."

"Oh, Fernie, I feel as if I should go mad with joy!"

Ferdinand dropped his spy-glass.

"Look here, Rachie," he said. "We must none of us get excited, on account of Bell. I am almost certain that ship is making for this island. But to be doubly sure, I shall fire off this gun when she gets within hearing distance. Now, the noise of the report may wake Bell and startle her; she is far too weak to be startled, so you must go down at once to White Castle, and if she awakes you must tell her very gently about the ship, and that we have got some good hope. Can I trust you to do that, Rachie? Can you be womanly enough to act wisely in this difficult time?"

"Oh, I think so; dear Fernie, I do think so!"

Ferdinand stooped and kissed Rachel on her forehead.

"Thank you," he said. "Remember, I trust you."

Rachel returned his affectionate glance with a very loving one. A new courageous grown-up expression filled her childish face; she flew down the slope.

Ferdinand knelt down at the foot of the flag-staff, clasped his hands round it, and closed his eyes. At such moments real prayer rises from the heart to heaven. Ferdinand said no words. So intense was his wish, he had no power to speak. Bell's life might depend on whether the ship came in. Was it coming in? Were safety and happiness, and perhaps home again, so near?

For an instant the boy felt almost afraid to open his eyes. When he did so, he saw a sight which never to his dying day could he think of without joy. The little steamer, which also carried sail, had come so near that he could absolutely see the figures on board. It was standing still on the almost calm waters; and now the sailors were lowering a boat, and a tall man with a long grey beard was getting into it. Four sailors came with him, and plying their oars bravely, the light boat skipped over the dancing waves in the direction of White Bay.

Ferdinand gave a low cry of delight.

"It is my father himself!" he exclaimed. He forgot his gun and his telescope, and rushing down the Sugar-Loaf arrived at the bay in time to see the boat land.

The moment Mr. Fraser stepped on shore Ferdinand was in his arms.

This is really the story of the children's adventures; what follows can be briefly told. It goes without saying that Bell soon got well again; that Ferdinand talked to his father until he was absolutely tired; that all the story of the last wonderful three months was repeated, not once, but many times.

And Mr. Fraser, on his side, told the children what agony he suffered when, after an absence of six weeks, he returned to his home to find that they had all flown, and that no one could give him the faintest clue to their whereabouts. He was almost distracted with grief and misery until through an accident he discovered that the *Nancy* brig, poor Jim Salter's old boat, was missing. He then guessed that the children had drifted out to sea.

It took him some little time to charter a steamer—the *Merry, Merry Ann* it was called—to go in search of them, and he certainly would never have stopped at desolate White Feather Island but for Bell's red flag.

"As it is, I should have found it very difficult to land on so rough a coast," he said, "but for this wonderful and unexpected calm."

The calm in question lasted exactly twenty-

four hours. Then the rain fell again, and the tempest blew, and Mr. Fraser told the children that they must all be content to remain on White Feather Island until the worst of the rainy season was over.

"But how different everything seems with father, and without him!" murmured Bell, as she laid her head on his breast that night.

Mr. Fraser had not forgotten to bring a basket of some necessary food with him in the boat, and the sailors rowed back to the *Merry, Merry Ann* to fetch a medicine-chest, and a great many more provisions, and some warm rugs and wraps. So that altogether the children felt themselves almost in the lap of luxury again.

"I don't think I'd mind living *always* on White Feather Island now," said Rachel.

But as no one else shared her sentiments, she did not repeat them, but sat with her arm round Mungo's neck, thinking of the joyful time when they should all be back at the Farm, and she could see her own father and mother again.

"Please, Uncle Michael," she said suddenly.

"Yes, Rachel?" he answered.

"When we leave White Feather Island, you will promise to bring our darling Mrs. Nanny-goat and dear little Nan away with us?"

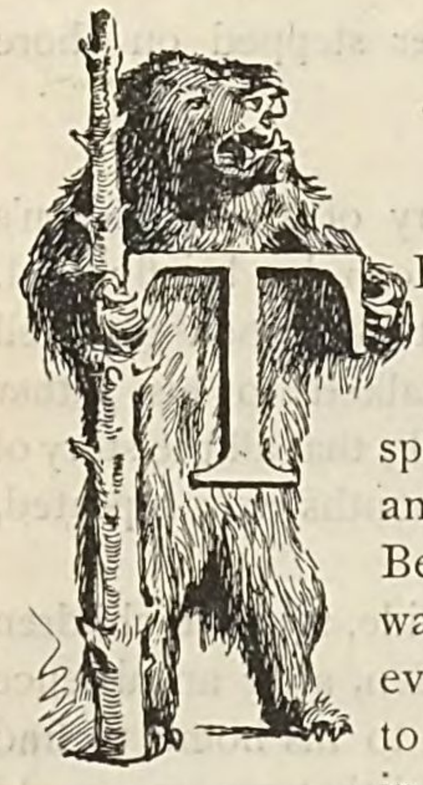
"And I should like to have a couple of those beautiful white birds," said Tony.

"And I," said Bell, "should always wish to keep my dear red flag, which somehow or other has been the means of bringing me back to father's arms."

"And you, Fernie," said his father, "what is your wish?"

"Nothing," he replied. "I am with you again, and Bell is safe. I'm too happy to wish."

THE END.



TIT FOR TAT IN THE TROPICS.

THE day was growing old in the depths of a tropical forest, far, far away in those spicy islands of which we read and learn in geography books. Beneath the forest the ground was low and swampy. Not even the savage Dyaks cared to build their rough habitations in such spots, and the animals had it all their own way.

A large orang-outang was pursuing his homeward path through this already gloomy forest. He walked on his short legs and knuckles along the stout branches, and, when he came to the end, swung himself by his sturdy arms on to the next.

"Good evening, Mr. Mias," cried a great tree-snake, which had coiled its four-feet-long beautiful black-and-gold body round a trunk, and was on the look-out for tree lizards above and for frogs below. "And where have you come from?"

"Up from some of the upland plantations which rise in the middle of the forest, where I verily believe the Dyaks have planted arillus and durion trees specially for me. I love the durion fruit, in spite of its thick skin and its spines which prick my fingers so. And now I'm off to bed!"

"You are early?"

"Well, you see I've got to make it. I can't sleep anyhow, like some people. I make a nice snug nest half way up a tree, with a big fern leaf to shelter me if it rains!"

"And you make the most of it, certainly," put in shrilly a lory, perching above. "Why, you lie in bed till the sun is up! I never heard of such laziness! Why, I'm up a-flying about at daybreak."

"No need to tell us that," grunted a python down in the swamp below, in a rather inarticulate manner, for he had just succeeded in crushing a cockatoo by winding round it coils of his long body, and was now slowly swallowing and digesting it, feathers and all.

"Oh dear!" shrieked the lory nervously. "You did give me a start down there! You shouldn't speak with your mouth full. It's not good manners."

AN UNEXPECTED DISCOVERY. (*See p.* 411.)

"For, as I was saying," continued the python wheezily, "everyone knows when you're awake by the noise you make! A flight of you winging through the forest quite makes a draught, and your screaming——"

The parakeet looked down upon the wallowing monster below with some pertness. The tree was tall and he felt very safe, in spite of the untimely end of his cousin the cockatoo. For the tree-snake he did not care a rap. The latter's taste lay only in the way of small reptiles, not of game or poultry. So he interrupted the python rudely, shrieking—

"Is nothing to that of a hornbill! Yes, I know I can't compare with him. Good-night!" he added pertly; and then, thinking discretion the better part of valour—for the python looked up and opened his vast mouth at the impudent little bird in a very alarming manner—the lory sped away over the forest like a streak of green lightning, and laughed long and shrill. He *was* a very impudent bird, and a small cockatoo whom he passed screamed to him to know what the joke was.

"Scored off a python, did you? Well, I *am* glad," remarked the cockatoo. "One owes them so many grudges. Really, one never feels quite safe with them!"

"You seem to have chosen a secure spot for your nest, though," commented the lory, surveying the hole in the decayed tree the cockatoo was furnishing and decorating.

"Yes," rejoined the latter complacently, "not a bad work, I think. I shall be very snug here with my eggs, I fancy!"

"Not so snug as Mrs. Hornbill, though," returned the lory. "What do you think her mate is doing to her? But you'd never guess, not if you tried from now till next hatching season."

"Something stupid, I daresay," retorted the cockatoo, raising its yellow crest rather superciliously. "I've no opinion of those great ugly birds with horns for crests, at all!"

"Well, it *is* an odd thing, and one I never heard of in any bird of any kind before. He's plastered her up!"

"Plastered her up?" shrieked the cockatoo. "Buried her alive? Poor thing! Whatever had she done?"

"Nothing at all, except lay an egg in a hollow tree. I suppose he was afraid she wouldn't sit upon it properly; so he's plastered her up—all but the point of her beak—with that long horned bill of his, and there the poor thing sits all day, and can hardly see out!"

"Well, I'm sure! Some husbands *are* tyrants," cried Mrs. Cockatoo, preening her crest defiantly, and hissing softly at hers, "*I* shouldn't let you try that little game on with *me*, my dear!"

"Couldn't if he wanted," laughed the lory. "For he doesn't carry the requisite tool in his mouth!"

"And shouldn't if he could," shrieked Mrs. Cockatoo, determined, like any woman, to have the last word. "*I* wouldn't be boxed up like that! *So* dull! And only for one egg, too! What sillies the hornbills are!"

"I quite agree with you," suddenly put in a gruff voice from down below, making the birds above start.

They looked through the leaves and saw a small black bear—a dapper-looking person, with buff legs and a white horse-shoe mark upon his breast. He licked his long lips pensively, and then added—

"But I got the better of them to-day, though!"

"How was that?" asked the lory.

"Why, I was out near a Dyak village this morning, after the shoots of some young cocoa-nut trees, only, you see, the Dyaks did not quite seem to like the idea of my sharing them with them, and so came out and——"

"Drove you away. Exactly!" shrieked the parakeet.

"But I took it out on the hornbills, though," grunted the bear savagely. "Failing cocoa-nut shoots, I don't at all object to *any* kind of fruit!"

"How greedy!" screamed all three birds at once. You ought to eat meat, and leave the fruit for us birds. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, climbing up about the fruit trees with those four great clumsy paws of yours!"

"And frightening the hornbills so that they did not dare to come near, but flew off, and left me that durion-tree all to myself! Oh! It

was good!" he added, licking his long lips gluttonously. "And now I'm off for a light supper of honey," he grunted, waddling away under the trees.

"Oh, we've no objection to that," cried the birds.

"Nobody wants any honey in the whole forest, except you and the bees, and if you don't mind *them*, you're very welcome," shrieked the parakeet.

"Thank you for nothing," growled the bear. He knew what he was after. He remembered that tree last year, and also how good the honey was that the swarm of wild bees had left in the deep hole in the trunk. He found it again, and then commenced to climb it.

Up, up, up. Clumsy and waddling he might be on the ground, but when there was any honey in question the bear was almost as agile up a tree as the ourang-outang. He reached a cross branch which faced the hole conveniently, and looked for it.

But the hole had vanished.

In its place was a mere slit, and as he looked his little eyes were nearly pecked out by an enormous bill which suddenly protruded from this fissure; at the same moment there was a tremendously loud, hoarse screaming, worse than a whole flock of parakeets.

The bear was so startled he nearly tumbled off the tree, and grasped the nearest branch convulsively.

The next minute there was a flapping of immense wings, and another huge beak suddenly perched upon the branch just above him.

"Come to pay us a call, eh?" screamed Mr. Hornbill.

"I'm at home," echoed his wife, from through the fissure in the tree. "Always at home, now!"

"I—I—came after—I thought there was a bees' nest here," stammered the bear, utterly taken aback.

"Oh! you've come to the wrong shop, if it's honey you're after," explained the hornbill. "I think some bees did build here last year, but we're the tenants this season. And really," he added, "after the dinner of durions you had this morning, I don't see how you can have any room left for honey!"

But the bear had crept down the tree quicker than he had climbed up, and slunk away through the forest, not a little crest-fallen.

The parakeet, who had followed and had overheard the conversation, nearly fell off the tree with laughing. EDITH E. CUTHELL.

GRANDFATHER'S RETURN.

WE had hung the last wreath of holly
And heaped up the fires to a blaze;
We laughed to see puss and old Carlo
Go sniffing about in amaze.

The sun had set red, as in triumph,
The full moon was climbing the hill,
A hush had come down with the gloaming,
E'en the wail of the wind was still.

No soughing, no sighing, no sobbing
Was heard in the pine-wood to-night,
As we round the log-fire all clustered
In a silence of glad delight.

But the very crown of the evening
Was hastening on—a surprise,
To be hailed with shouts and caresses,
The sunshine of laughing young eyes.

Long years have gone by since that Christmas—
Their joys and their pains then in store;
But to-night with the rest I am standing,
A light-hearted child, at the door.

Dear grandfather back from a journey,
And we like young bees buzzing round;
The clash of the bells intermingling
A jubilant babel of sound.

Such presents, such joys for the morrow;
And when we at last were in bed,
Our hearts would keep thrilling and throbbing—
"'Twas Love's Christmas carol," we said.

"UNLUCKY BOB."

"HULLO!" cried Bob. "Look what I've found."

"What?" cried his sister Winnie.

"Not money!" said his Cousin Fred.

But it was money; it was a large round five-shilling piece.

"There's luck!" said Bob. "Who would have thought of looking for a five-shilling piece at the foot of an old sign-post? You two must take the baskets now—I have enough to carry," and Bob thrust both hands into his pockets.

"Well, one thing is certain," said Winnie; "we must never call you 'Unlucky Bob' again."

"No, indeed," said Fred, "you will have to be called 'Lucky Bob,' though you did tumble into the pond."

"And fall off the barn roof into Bridget's wash-tub," added Winnie.

"What will you buy?" asked Winnie presently.

"BOB THRUST BOTH HANDS INTO HIS POCKETS."

"Are you going to spend the money?" asked Fred; "I should save it."

"He'd be sure to lose it," said Winnie; "he always loses his money."

Bob said nothing at all. He had quite made up his own mind, not only to spend the money, but on what to spend it; only he did not intend to tell Fred, for Fred always laughed at him.

When the three children reached the market, Fred and Winnie busied themselves, making the purchases for Fred's mother; but Bob disappeared.

"I expect he's gone to buy something," said Winnie.

"I wonder what he'll get," said Fred.

"Something alive, I'm sure," said Winnie; "he's so fond of animals."

And Winnie was right. When it was time to start home again, Bob reappeared with a very red face, and a large basket in his arms. Inside the basket was an old grey hen.

"Well!" said Winnie.

"You don't mean to say——" began Fred.

Bob put down the basket, and looked at his sister and cousin defiantly.

"I am going to take her home, so that mother can have fresh eggs every day," he said.

"It is rather an old hen," said Fred, smiling; "what did you do with the rest of your money?"

"The rest!" said Bob; "I gave it all for the hen. The man let me have the basket for nothing."

"How kind of him!" said Fred.

"The hen will be a great bother in the train, Bob," said Winnie, "and I don't know where you will keep the hen when you get it home."

"I never thought of that," said Bob. "I suppose it wouldn't do to keep it in the kitchen."

"Fancy keeping a hen in a kitchen," cried Fred, laughing loudly; "only a town boy would think of such a thing!"

"Oh, I wish you hadn't bought it," said Winnie.

"Unlucky Bob!" cried Fred.

Bob looked first angry, then sad; then he picked up the basket, and carried it back to the market-place.

"What is he going to do?" asked Fred.

"Change it for something, I expect," said Winnie; "he's always changing his things. I do hope he will get rid of the hen—I'm sure we've no room for hens at home."

"No, indeed," said Fred, thinking of the small back-yard behind the little town house

in which Bob and Winnie lived, and to which they were to return the next day.

The two cousins watched and waited for Bob, and then walked slowly towards home. They reached the sign-post at the cross-roads before Bob overtook them.

He was carrying a small cage with a yellow bird in it.

"There," he said proudly, "I gave the man the hen back, and bought this canary. There will be plenty of room for that at home."

"I suppose it *is* a canary," said Fred, putting down his basket, and looking closely at the bird; "you know, they do paint sparrows yellow."

"Of course it is a canary," said Bob indignantly, "and a very tame one too; the man said it would not fly away even if it were taken out of the cage."

"You don't expect me to believe that?" said Fred. Bob put his hand on the door of the cage.

"Wait until we get home," said Winnie.

"And shut all the windows," said Fred.

Bob opened the cage-door—the bird hopped out, and perched on his finger. He smiled triumphantly; but the smile faded quickly as the bird stretched its wings and flew upwards.

"What a pity!" said Winnie.

"Unlucky Bob!" said Fred; "I am sorry."

There was nothing to do but to pick up the cage, and go home. Bob was very quiet.

"Bob," said Winnie suddenly, "I believe Farmer Wood's boy Joe would buy the cage. I heard him asking Bridget if she knew where he could get one."

Bob's face brightened. "I'll run and see," he said.

As soon as he was out of hearing, Fred turned to Winnie, and said—

"We won't say anything at home about the hen and canary—they would only laugh at Bob."

* * * * *

That evening, as Bridget was crossing the yard with her milk-pails, a light flashed suddenly from behind the barn-door, and a figure sprang out from the darkness. Bridget started, screamed, dropped the pails, and called out at the top of her voice—"Tramps, help! help!" The farmer, his wife, Fred, Winnie, and two of the men rushed out into the yard.

"Behind the barn-door!" cried Bridget.

"I've got him," cried one of the men; and out of his hiding-place he dragged, not a tramp, nor a thief, but Unlucky Bob!

"Bob, what do you mean?" said his uncle; "where did you get that lantern?"

"From Farmer Wood's boy Joe," said Bob. "I didn't mean to frighten Bridget."

"Then you can give it back to Joe," said his uncle; "you mustn't take that home to frighten your mother and sisters."

"I'm very sorry, uncle," said Bob; "I didn't mean——"

"Well, well," said the farmer, "we must say no more about it as you are going home to morrow. What did you buy at the market to-day?"

Bob's face got so red that it was well the farmer did not see it.

"What time will Winnie and Bob have to start to-morrow?" asked Fred quickly.

Bob gave Fred's hand a friendly squeeze.

"I'll make Joe give you something for the lantern," whispered Fred as the boys went up to bed together.

But Joe was not so easily managed, and the best that Fred could do for "Unlucky Bob" was to sell the lantern for a threepenny-piece with a hole in it.

"Take care of it, Bob," said Fred as they jumped into the trap; "you can buy some sweets."

Bob nodded, and Winnie smiled. Bob talked very little as they drove along.

When they reached the town, they jumped quickly out of the trap.

"Now, Bob," said Winnie, "buy the sweets!"

"Be quick," said Fred.

Bob looked very uncomfortable.

"He's lost the threepenny-piece," said Fred.

"Where did you put it?" asked Winnie.

"In my mouth," said Bob. "I thought it would be safe there; but it's gone, and I'm afraid I must have——"

"Swallowed it!" cried Fred.

"Swallowed what?" said his uncle.

"A threepenny-piece!" said Winnie.

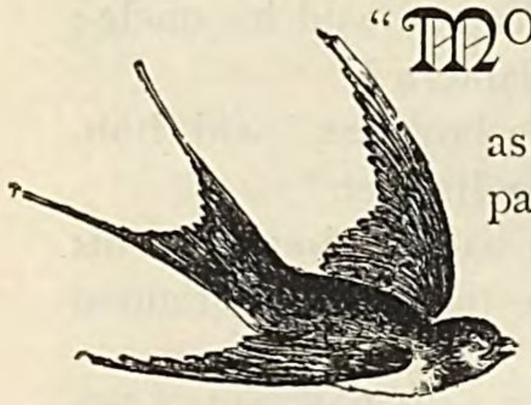
"Impossible!" cried his uncle.

But it was only too true.

"Well, you are an unlucky boy!" said his uncle to him when he had heard the whole of the story—"no wonder they call you Unlucky Bob."

MAGGIE BROWNE.

AN UNGRATEFUL FLEDGLING.



"MOTHER, what is love?" inquired a young swallow as he nestled under his parent's wing.

"Love keeps the world warm, child," answered the elder bird, spreading her soft feathers a little further over the contents of the nest. "It makes the sun shine, the grass grow, and the flowers bloom. But what put that into your head?"

"I heard the south wind whisper about it to the roses while you were away," and the youngster opened his yellow beak to its widest, well pleased at the sound of his own voice. "The roses tossed their heads and said nothing; so I thought they did not know, or care perhaps, about what they were told; yet it is good to be warm," and the speaker nestled closer to that sheltering wing.

"Those flowers are nearly as silly as yourself, my son," piped Mother Swallow with a fond smile. "They take all the sunshine that is lavished on them as the natural effect of their own beauty, instead of being the cause of it. Of course, then, it never enters their heads to be thankful for the gift. Of all bad things, may Heaven preserve me most from ingratitude!"

Most of the swallow family were by this time fast asleep, after a satisfying meal of worms; but the inquisitive fledgling who had first spoken was inclined to be wakeful, and still more inclined to ask questions.

"I don't know what such long words mean," he twittered rather plaintively; "and this big brother, who was only hatched yesterday, takes up more room than all the rest of us together. Oh, he squeezes me dreadfully!"

The complaint sent the mother's thoughts into a new channel, and she muttered—

"Yes, it's a very strange thing. I've had more trouble in hatching him than the others; they were all out first, and his size is certainly remarkable. Ah, well! I ought to be proud of such a fine child, and so I am. Be quiet, Gapes; why can't you go to sleep like your brother and sisters?"

Now Gapes was the eldest of the youngsters, and his ideas on life had begun to extend beyond eating and sleeping; indeed, he considered the use of the tongue to be the next best thing. Like many small people, this fledgling was fond of notice, and after listening for a minute, while his parent talked to herself, he pecked impatiently at the white waistcoat above.

"Mother, I don't believe the creature belongs to us at all!"

"Fie! fie!" cried the other indignantly; "you've no more sense in that round head of yours than the roses yonder. Why, I hatched each of you myself; so I ought to know best, though it seems the fashion nowadays for young folk to make assertions before the very beaks of those who are old enough to be their grandmothers!"

Gapes was abashed, but not for long.

"I've been out in the world nearly three weeks," said he; "and when you were away from us, I was too hungry to shut my eyes at first. Because of this, I saw one morning a big, big thing, something like you on account of her wings and tail, only they were ever so much larger. Well, as she flew past she popped an egg into our nest—an egg she carried in her mouth—and was off again in a twinkling, before there was even time to cry out."

"What a cock-and-bull story, my dear!" remarked Mother Swallow, with an uneasy laugh. "The fact is, you had a nightmare, and as your brains are not half grown you fancied it was true. Pshaw!"

Gapes did not approve of being laughed at; nobody does, whether three days or thirty years old; besides, he considered he had a good right to his own opinion; so he shrugged his little shoulders, and frowned in silence.

After this the hours passed peacefully enough, for the sunset was painting the western sky with all manner of pink, amber, and pearl tints; and by the time evening had turned them to a sheet of tender blue-grey, there was the silence of sleep in the swallows' nest.

Day after day went by, each in much the same fashion as the one before; but changes were creeping on, and Gapes held firmly to his opinion about the pushing brother. The latter ate twice as much as the others, he shoved his brothers about mercilessly, and stretched himself till the rest were squeezed in discomfort, which, of course, grew worse as Bully increased in size. One day a terrible scene took place when Mother Swallow was far from home in search of a much-needed meal for herself.

"I tell you what it is," said Gapes; "you're making yourself a perfect nuisance, and I wish you'd never been hatched. If only I were a bit bigger, I'd turn you out!"

Bully laughed long and loud. "It's an odd thing," he observed presently, "but that's the very thing *I've* been thinking of doing. There are too many of us here, and I've heard that the weakest goes to the wall."

"You brute!" shrieked Gapes, trembling with fear and anger. "The others would not be weak if you did not eat their share of food as well as your own."

"Just so," was the cool retort; "when I've made more room in this nest, there'll be fewer mouths to feed. Out you go, Bald-Pate."

Gapes stared, for without more ado the last speaker deliberately shoved his head under the nearest brother, and, deaf to his agonised cries, raised him on his broad back. There was nothing now between the victim and space, for the edge of the nest was on a level with Bully's back, which gave a sudden jerk, and the burden was launched into destruction.

"Now, Squeaker, it's your turn. There'll be more room for growing down there, and you can send up word what you think of it."

This speech, panted out, roused Gapes, and he attacked the murderer just as he was treating poor Squeaker like the other fledgling.

"Now, now," said Bully soothingly, "don't be so peppery, or I may be tempted to send you to join your brothers. That the house is getting too small for us is as plain to see as your beak, and if you can only hold your tongue, the mother's feelings need never be hurt by the knowledge that *I* have made more room here."

There was some reason in this, and Gapes, swallowing his wrath as best he might, sat plunged in thought. He felt tolerably safe, for being the eldest of the family, he was by this time a fair size, yet he could ill bear to sit quietly by the side of one who had proved himself as selfish as he was heartless. The wrathful youngster had, however, no wings strong enough to carry him away, and even then what could he do without the help and shelter of a mother's love?

Presently there were cries of distress, a flutter of wings, and the nestlings knew the parent had returned.

"Alas!" wailed she, "those robbers must have been here. Boys are surely born to be the plague of innocent birds, to say nothing of others who know not how to return evil for evil."

Exclaiming thus, Mother Swallow wheeled about the cold still bodies on the ground, and from time to time she touched them tenderly, but soon found this was useless, and so fluttered sorrowfully away to the others. Gapes held his peace with tearful eyes while Bully told a lying tale suggested by the cry of robbers, for that seemed enough to explain the tragedy.

After this nothing happened for a few weeks, except that Mother Swallow's two remaining children grew and throve apace. Gapes' dark coat, with pretty forked tail and white waistcoat, were exactly like those of the elder bird; but, strange to say, Bully did not resemble her in a single detail. His whole person was more than double her size; his tail feathers gave not the faintest promise of a fork; lastly, his dress was brown from top to toe. Still the good mother never doubted, never relaxed for an hour her tender care, and put down Gapes' dislike to jealousy. At last the eventful day came when, after trying their wings close at home, the elder decided they must go further to see the world.

"Ah! love keeps the world warm, but it's cold out here, and I don't like it," twittered Gapes, as he fluttered reluctantly to the grass.

"Nonsense!" said Mother Swallow impatiently; "see how beautifully Bully gets on! Why, he is already half-way across the lawn to the railing, and I must go to get him some

refreshment. You follow as you best can, and don't be scared by a shadow."

Yes, Bully flew heavily along till he reached some iron railings, where he sat making a low strange noise, as different as possible from a swallow's twitter. Backwards and forwards went the mother bird, getting flies or anything she could to reward the exertions of her nurseling, who snatched at all without a single word of thanks.

"I wish, my dear, you'd try to sing," said Mother Swallow presently, as she perched beside Bully to rest. "You have not once done so like the rest of the family, and sometimes it makes me feel uneasy."

The other gave a mocking laugh, and said nothing.

"You might try, just to please me," went on the mother, a little sadly; but the undutiful child spread his wings, took a circling flight, and then settled where he was before.

The sun shone, and all the world was bright with happiness; but a shadow crept over Mother Swallow's heart as she watched her eldest son flutter towards her over the lawn. She sighed, and then Bully, for the first time, broke silence—

"You complain I do not sing like your family. Well, that's no wonder, seeing I've nothing to do with it. My mother, like a wise creature, put me out to nurse where she knew I should be well looked after; and since you've been foolish enough to spend weeks of care on me, I've reaped the benefit. When folk are no longer useful, it's best they should part company, and I'm old enough and strong enough to take care of myself. So good-bye, and better luck next time; cuck—cuck—cuckoo!" and with a shriek of derisive laughter the brown bird flew away.

Mother Swallow sat on, hardly able to believe her ears, till Gapes, who had overheard every word, said gently—

"Don't grieve, mother; I always thought he never really belonged to us, and now we are both sure. It was he who pushed my brothers out of the nest, and he does not know the meaning of love."

Just then the sun hid his face, a chill breeze went moaning by, and the parent bird shivered.

"Let us go home, child; a storm is coming," said she, in the quiet tones of despair. "The sharpest weapon to pierce the heart is ingratitude, and had not love blinded me I might have recognised the colours of the horrid cuckoo race. Gapes, we will leave the country as soon as your wings are strong enough, and seek a more genial clime, where the cold wind of ingratitude does not freeze our warmth of heart, nor northern blasts that of our bodies."

"Do not grieve overmuch," replied Gapes caressingly. "Yes, I will go with you, and we will forget our troubles in a sunny land. For, remember, you told me 'Love keeps the world warm.'"

S. M. Crawley-Boevey.

THE CHILDREN AND THE DOVES.

THESE are the doves from our dovecot, dearest,
Feathery-fair as a flake of snow—
You are our neighbour, and live the nearest,
And you are their little friend, you know.

See, they know you, and love you, Molly,
(Little white dove in a pinafore!)
Cooing with sweetest melancholy
When you go through the garden door.

You mustn't go for a great while longer,
Now we have got you, the doves and I.
See, the young ones are growing stronger;
Soon they will spread their wings and fly.

What: you must go and water your roses?—
Are not the doves just as pretty as they,
Or as the lily that slowly uncloses
Like a dove's wing on a summer day?

Stay, little Molly, and look at me feed them:
Throw them yourself, dear, some Indian corn;
If they come fluttering round, never heed them,
Or in their shyness they'll leave you forlorn.

Little white doves and white-pinafored Molly,
All here to play with a little rough Jack;
Stay here for ever! It *would* be so jolly!
Why through the garden door need you go back?

FEEDING THE DOVES. (*See p.* 416.)

Who Introduced Christmas-Trees into England?

A Christmas-tree, with its branches loaded with toys and other knicknacks, makes, when its tiny candles of various colours have all been lit, a pretty object at a children's party. We have grown so accustomed to see it now that it is hard to think that there ever was a time when Christmas jollifications were not adorned with a nicely-decked tree. As a matter of fact, the use of the tree is of very recent origin in England. It is said that we owe it to the late Prince Consort. The winter of 1840 was the first that he spent in England, and at the grand festivities in Windsor Castle he provided a handsome tree, covered with beautiful presents, that were afterwards distributed among the Queen's guests, old and young alike. Prince Albert borrowed the idea from his native country of Germany, where the tree has been a feature of Christmas gatherings for a long period.

Travels of a Terrier.

An officer was once returning by rail from Rawul Pindi to his home in Umballa—both places being in the Punjab, but many miles apart. He missed his fox-terrier when only a short distance from the former town, and at once telegraphed to his friends and the railway folk to send his dog on; but no dog being found, its owner gave it up as lost. Thirteen days later the terrier arrived at his master's house—weary, thin, and melancholy-looking, but still with spirit enough to show many signs of joy at finding itself safe at home again. The faithful animal had actually followed the train which it had seen carrying away its master, passing railway crossings, going through stations, and crossing bridges; running the while every kind of risk from trains going to and fro; picking up food as best it could, and resisting the attacks of the pariah dogs. This tale seems to be almost incredible, but it is declared to be true, and we have all learned by this time to be careful before rejecting as false stories about the extraordinary intelligence of dogs.

A Brave Deaf and Dumb Girl.

A few years ago Bridget Prunty, an Irish deaf and dumb girl, gained great praise for a truly heroic deed. Her father had gone to clean an out-house in which a bull was kept, when the animal broke its chain, turned on the feeble old man, and gored him frightfully with its horns. By mere chance Bridget came that way. Seeing her father in danger, she rushed at the bull, seized it by the nose-ring, and thrashed it about the head with a stick. A fierce struggle ensued. Being unable to call for help, she had to rely solely upon herself. The bull inflicted severe injuries upon her, but she gradually got the better of the furious creature. Then she threw away the stick, and, still holding the ring in her right hand, she succeeded in raising her poor father from the floor. Backing towards the door she got her father outside, and managed to shut the bull within the house. Unfortunately, in spite of

her noble efforts, her father died about an hour after his rescue. A number of people in Longford County, in which her home was, presented the brave girl with a sum of money in reward of her splendid conduct.

Fight between a Cobra and two Mongooses.

There took place not long since at Colombo, in Ceylon, a fight between a cobra and a couple of mongooses. When the latter saw the snake, they were shy at first, although they ran around it inquisitively. The cobra, which was a fine specimen, and beautifully marked, on the other hand, showed alarm, and drew itself up ready to strike. Presently the combat began. Over and over again the mongooses managed, with amazing agility, to seize the cobra by the tail, and retreat before they could be struck. The snake grew tired of watching its unwearied foes running round first one way and then the other, darting in at it every now and then, and jumping as rapidly back out of harm's reach; till at length, failing to turn with sufficient speed to face the mongooses, one of the latter sprang in and caught the cobra by the back of its head, killing it at once.

"Marocco" and his Tricks.

"Marocco," a performing horse that belonged to a Scotsman named Banks, created quite a sensation by his tricks in the time of Shakespeare. He could dance of course; that was a minor piece of cleverness. He could take a glove to its owner whose name his master whispered in his ear. He could tell the exact number of pence in a silver coin that his trainer showed to him. But the exploit that gained him greatest renown was his climbing to the top of old St. Paul's, which feat he is said to have accomplished. Whether he did these things or not, both Banks and "Marocco" were reputed to have dealings with Satan, and were burned in Portugal or at Rome, for accounts differ, by the superstitious bigots of the age.

Zulu Hats.

In China a kind of sedge is grown in the rice fields, for manufacture into hats and matting for bedroom and drawing-room floors. The hats are of enormous size, very light, and a few years ago were extremely popular in England, where indeed they are still largely used, being sold for a penny apiece. In 1878, when they were first introduced into England, they were called Zulu hats, under the erroneous impression that they were the native headgear of the Zulus. As many as fifteen millions of these hats, all made by hand, have been exported in one year from China. This great trade employs many women and children. So abundant were they in England in the year above named that they were used, with their crowns cut out, as guards for strawberry plants.

In Presence of the Author.

When Scott's novel of "Guy Mannering" was first published, Lord Hermand, one of the Scottish judges, is said to have been so fond of it that he talked of nothing else for weeks but the scenes in which the lawyers of the time are so well described. In fact, during a discussion of some dry legal point in a case that he was hearing, he took one of the volumes out of his pocket, and, in spite of his brother-judges, insisted upon reading aloud from the bench the famous chapter about "High Jinks." He read with so much liveliness, giving point to all the jokes and speeches, that everybody in court was delighted. Sir Walter Scott, in his official capacity of clerk of the Court of Session, sat just below the judge, and was a witness of the whole incident. His authorship of the novel being at that time a secret, he must have been all the more pleased at this unconscious testimony to its merits.

"Raining Cats and Dogs."

When there is an unusually heavy and steady downpour of rain, accompanied with high wind, people often say "It rains cats and dogs." The meaning of the phrase is not plain, but Dr. Brewer accounts for it thus:—Amongst the old superstitions of Northern folk it was held that the cat had great influence on the weather. Even to-day when puss is very frisky English sailors will declare that "the cat has a gale of wind in her tail," and other persons will assure you that "it is going to rain." Witches that rode upon the tempest took the shapes of cats, and the miners of the Harz Mountains call the stormy north-west wind "cat's nose." The dog, like the wolf, is a signal of wind, both animals waiting on the Scandinavian storm-god, Odin. In several old German pictures

the wind is represented by the head of a dog or wolf, from which blasts come forth. Thus the cat is the symbol of the falling rain, and the dog of the gusts of wind.

Prince Charlie's Pilot.

Roderick Mackinnon, while acting as pilot to the boat that was bearing Prince Charlie from Skye in 1746, accidentally fell overboard and was nearly drowned. When he was quite restored, his friends congratulated him on his narrow escape; but he only replied in Gaelic that "he had rather that he and ten thousand more had died if his prince had but gained his end." Curiously enough, forty years later, Roderick, now ninety-seven years of age, was actually drowned between the islands of Skye and Uist, almost at the very spot of his former mishap.

The Great Ant-eater.

In the tropical regions of South America there lives a big, hairy, queer-looking creature that is known as the ant-eater, or ant-bear, of whose appearance the picture on this page will give you a good notion. It has a lanky head and snout, bushy tail (which it throws over its body as a kind of coverlet during its sleep while the blazing sun is high), and a very long slender tongue, by means of which it draws ants (for insects are its chief food) out of their hills. This animal is not a sociable being, and is said to be dull and unintelligent. At the same time when provoked it will show fight, and its strength is such that it can crush its enemy to death. It belongs to the Order of toothless animals, of which the Cape ant-eater—an entirely different creature so far as looks go—is also a member.

ANT-EATERS AT DINNER.

A Stowaway in Central Africa.

A person hiding himself on board a ship until the vessel shall have sailed so far from land that it is not worth while to return and put him ashore is usually called a "stowaway." But the term may be applied to land travelling, too, as Mr. Stanley discovered when he was leading his small army of Africans from Lake Albert to Zanzibar. A few Europeans, including Emin Pasha, accompanied him. One morning a little boy eleven years old was found in the camp. It seemed that a week before this he had left his father's village and joined Mr. Stanley's porters, having covered his head with cloth in order to escape detection. His father, however, turned up to claim him. When

the lad was asked why he had gone away with strangers, he said he preferred his friend to his father. He also stated that his father did not beat him, but that he wished to see the place where the guns came from and where the thunder medicine (gunpowder) was made. Of course, Mr. Stanley restored the boy; a bright little fellow with intelligent eyes, to his parent.

The Sparrow in India.

Jack Sparrow has now conquered another country, for we learn that he has found a home in India. There he is full of fight and impudence, just as he is elsewhere. Let him see himself in a looking-glass, and he will attack that other bird for hours, not stopping to eat, or drink, or rest. He is fond of the Hindoo, too. An instance is mentioned in which a sparrow reared her family in a cage that hung above the head of a working tailor, and was not dismayed by the fact that the cage was often taken down that visitors might the better behold the little family within. Even the removal of the eggs for a while—a thing that generally scares away birds for good—failed to excite the least alarm in the parental breast.

A Dog that Went a-Shopping.

There once was a beautiful Newfoundland dog that was as honest and faithful as Tray in the old song. He wore a collar, and on it these words were cut—"I am John Crawford's dog. Whose dog are you?" So everybody knew him. It was almost a daily trick to lay a halfpenny on his nose, and bid him, at a signal, toss it up in the air and catch it in his mouth. Then, coin in mouth, he would trot off to the baker's for a halfpenny roll, or "bawbee bap," as they call it in Scotland, where his home was. One morning our hero went to the shop, but no baker was there. So he waited, and waited, and waited. Still no baker came. By-and-by he lost his patience—for dogs are mortal, like the rest of us—and, resting his paws on the counter, he looked round. Then, spying a scone, which in his opinion was worth a halfpenny, he laid the piece of money on the counter, took up the scone, and walked out of the shop.

What became of the Golf Ball?

Last summer a strange incident was witnessed on the Fairfield Common in Derbyshire. A member of the Buxton and High Peak Golf Club, in the course of the game, drove his ball to a considerable distance. It was a fine stroke, and he was walking leisurely towards the spot where the ball lay, when he saw a cow, that had been grazing on the Common, go up to the ball and swallow it. This was done very deliberately, but probably she repented of her boldness at leisure. The incident, however, is true, as an entry of it in the club's books for June, 1891, will testify.

Why they Live in Pile Dwellings.

Many of the coast tribes of New Guinea live in pile dwellings in the sea. Upon a strong platform, raised on piles driven into the sand, they build rain-proof houses of laths of split cane and thatch the roofs with palm-leaves. The rooms are lofty, and the better sort of dwellings are provided with a verandah in front, from which a ladder runs down to the water. Communication with the shore is, of course, had by means of boats, of which one is always kept moored to the ladder. But why do the natives live in houses like these, which, in spite of their healthiness, are not very convenient? Partly because it is terribly hot on shore, but mainly because the fierce folk that live in the bush in the interior of the great island are fond of making sudden attacks on the settlements along the coasts. Therefore, to avoid these surprises, the possible victims hit upon the device of erecting their houses on piles in the water, where, if not positively safe, they should not be raided unawares.

He Tried to Save the Cat.

It is not often that we hear of anyone risking his life to save a cat; but this was the case some time ago with a small boy of six, named Arthur Allen. As Arthur was playing in a street in Shepherd's Bush, London, he noticed that a cat, frightened by the traffic, was crouching near the feet of a horse in a passing cart, and he ran into the road to try to rescue it. While the kind-hearted wee fellow was thus engaged, he was himself knocked down by another vehicle, and very seriously injured. He was taken to the West London Hospital, where he was attended to at once. Little Arthur Allen (he got all right again) is entitled to a place in our growing company of heroic children.

OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES.

WORD PUZZLE.

I AM a piece of furniture.
Behead me, and I am a part of the body.
Change my head, and I am more than one.
Behead me, and I am invisible.
Change my head, and I am a kind of tree.
Change my tail, and I am a part of a fish.
Change my head, and I am a box to hold grain.
Change my tail, and I am something children wear.

F. WIGHTMAN.
(Aged $13\frac{3}{4}$.)

High Street, Shaftesbury.

BURIED NAMES OF RIVERS.

1. CHARLES is a good artist.
2. Frances killed a wasp yesterday.
3. Do you like fruit? I do very much.
4. That little girl eats more than is good for her.
5. You have lost Esther's doll.

DAISY FIELD.
(Aged $10\frac{1}{2}$.)

Basildene,
14, *Cambalt Road,*
Putney Hill, S.W.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

MY whole is a cathedral city of England.

1. My 7, 5, 6, 9, 10 is a pulpy fruit.
2. My 4, 8, 7 is useful for washing.
3. My 1, 8, 7 is a young animal.
4. My 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 is what horses often do.

ALICE M. JACKSON.
(Aged 14.)

Windsor House, Tynemouth.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

IF the following words be transposed, their initials, read downwards, will form the name of an English city:—

1. COOSMW, a Russian city.
2. ANOV, an English river.
3. NOOT, a Sicilian city.
4. CEEHRST, an English town.
5. HLLU, a port on the Humber.
6. ABEL, an island off Italy.
7. ABCEEMOS, a district in Cheshire.
8. BEIRT, an Italian river.
9. AAENR, a Russian lake.
10. BKINRSY, a Russian town.

ROBERT N. NEILANS.
(Aged 11.)

Zelia, Dulwich Rise,
Lordship Lane, East Dulwich.

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

IF the missing letters be supplied, the whole will form a well-known proverb.

F×i×t×e×r×n×v×r×o×f×i×l×d×.

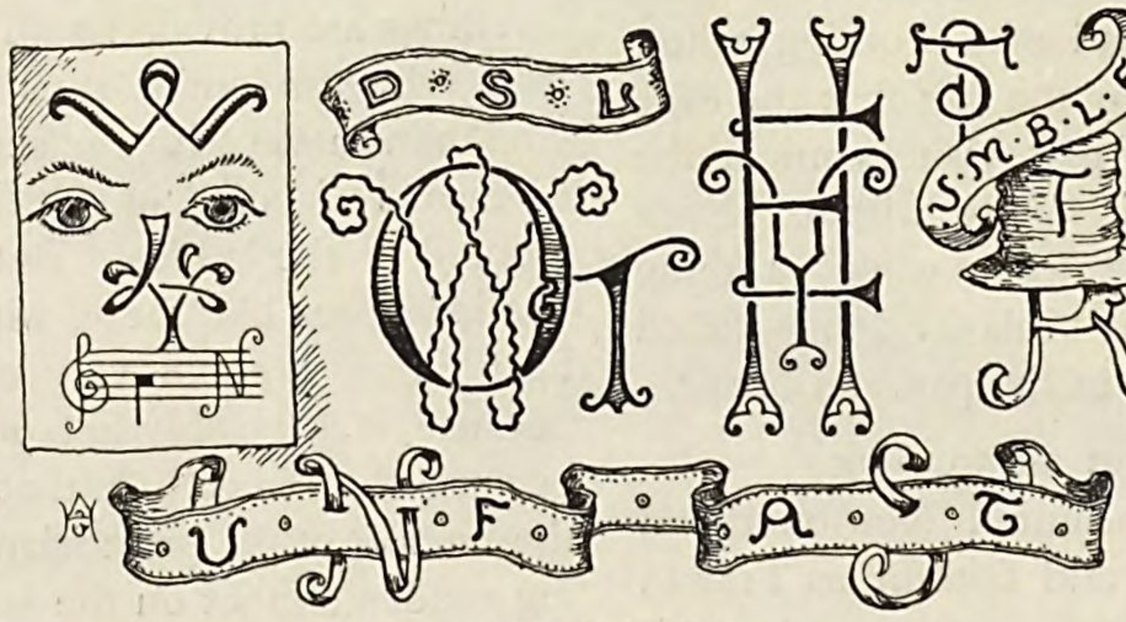
MAUD BUTLER.
(Aged 11.)

Trinity Lodge, Cambridge.

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

MY first is in joke, but not in fun.
My second is in pistol, but not in gun.
My third is both in sleep and in snore.
My fourth is in pig, but not in boar.
My fifth in behind, but not in before.
My sixth is in chair, but not in door.
My seventh is in given, but not in take.
My eighth is in tart, but not in cake.
My whole is a quadruped, with skin thick and tough,
And now I think I have told you enough.

OLIVE M. JARVES.
(Aged 10.)
Cromer.



PICTORIAL REBUS.
The above represents a quotation from Shakespeare.

CHARADES.

MY first is a reptile.
My second is an article of furniture.
My whole is a fungus.

My first is a gentle breeze.
My second is a toy.
My whole is a fungus.

PERCY COOPER.
(Aged $8\frac{1}{4}$.)

Westendstrasse 46a, Carlsruhe.

HIDDEN SAYING.

A a a c d d d e e e e e e g h h i i l l l m n n n o p r s s t t t t u v w x y y.

The above letters, when properly arranged, will form a well-known saying of a famous admiral.

J. WILLOCKS.
(Aged $15\frac{1}{2}$.)

21, *The Common, Upper Clapton.*

METAGRAM.

MY first is coming after the usual time.
Change my head, and I am a companion.
Again, and I am what is on the calendar.
Again, and I am destiny.
Again, and I am a girl's name.
Again, and I am the top of the head.
Again, and I am something for closing an entrance.
Again, and I am to appraise.

ANNIE L. FOUNTAIN.
(Aged $11\frac{1}{2}$.)

35, *Elm Grove,*
Hammersmith.

"Where Shall We Sail?"

Words by Ellis Walton. *Music by* R. B. Addison.

mf Brightly.

Voice.

1. Where shall we sail now the sun is low, And the lit - tle stream shines with a
2. Where shall we sail? for the sun's gone down; And the bright fai - ry path, like a

Piano.

mf

ro - sy glow? Shall we drift on, up that path of gold, To some
dream, has flown: Cool blows the breeze, and the dai - sies sleep— Let us

mf *p*

mf

far fai - ry - land full of joys un - told? Sail! Sail! a -
make for the shore ere the first stars peep. Sail! Sail! 'tis

cres. 𝄋 *mf*

p *cres.* *ritard.* *mf* *a tempo.*

𝄋

ritard.

- way from dear home; A ma - gic voice calls us a - far to roam.
joy - ous to roam! But sweet - er, far sweet - er, is home— dear home!

ritard.

Repeat from 𝄋 in Chorus.

PAGES FOR VERY LITTLE FOLK.

A SONG IN SEASON.

SING a song of Christmas,
Ice and frost and snow;
Mince pies and plum puddings
Standing in a row.

Christmas-trees all lighted up:
Isn't it fine fun
When we share the presents?—
A gift for everyone.

A SNOW-BALL FIGHT.

TOM, Har-ry, and Sam woke up one win-ter morn-ing to find the ground cov-er-ed with snow; and it snow-ed all day, to their great de-light, and Har-ry said o-ver and o-ver a-gain—

"Oh, this is a day
For a snow-ball fray."

"Not quite," said Sam; "we must wait till it has left off snow-ing."

"'PEEP-BO.'"

So they had to watch the snow fall-ing like white feath-ers, and then Har-ry, who was ver-y fond of his lit-tle sis-ter, plac-ed her at the nurs-er-y win-dow to look at the snow-flakes, and told her a fair-y stor-y of an old wo-man call-ed Moth-er Car-ey, who was sit-ting up a-mongst the clouds and was pluck-ing the white goose's feath-ers and throw-ing them down.

"Is not that fun-ny, Ba-by?" he said.

But Ba-by on-ly put her hand o-ver her face, and laugh-ed and said, "Peep-bo."

The next day the snow was deep up-on the ground.

Off went the boys as soon as break-fast was o-ver.

"We'll have a good fight," said Sam. "Har-ry and I will have the first turn, and Tom shall make snow-balls for us."

"Tom may make them for you," said Har-ry, "but I will make mine for my-self. I want to see if I can't win with out help."

"Ver-y well," said Sam; "but you will find that two a-gainst one is not so ver-y eas-y to beat."

Har-ry roll-ed up a heap of snow-balls for him-self, and Tom made a pile for Sam, and half stoop-ed down so that he might pick them up eas-i-ly to give to him.

Then they be-gan. Sam took one of the balls, and, rais-ing it high a-bove his head, took aim at Har-ry, who put up his arms to keep it from hit-ting his face. Then in a mo-ment he threw one of his balls at Sam. But Sam was read-y with an-oth-er ball, and Tom shout-ed—

"Well done! you have hit his cap;

next time you will send one in his face."

But Har-ry said—

"Not just yet," and sent a ball that hit Sam full in the face and made his cheeks tin-gle and his eyes quite hot, and the tears came in-to them so that he could not see.

"An-oth-er ball, Tom," he shout-ed; "give them to me quick."

And he threw them as fast as Tom gave them, to where he thought Har-ry was stand-ing, just op-po-site to him.

But Har-ry got out of the way, and aim-ed his own balls bet-ter, be-cause his eyes were all right.

At last, when Sam's eyes got a lit-tle bet-ter, he sud-den-ly threw a ball that went right in-to Har-ry's face, and his eyes and cheeks be-gan to tin-gle, just as Sam's had done. And he had no one to give him balls, and Sam's snow-balls hit him all the time.

"HARRY . . . PUT UP HIS ARMS" (*p.* 424).

"Time to leave off, I think," said Tom. "You've had a good time of it; but you see, Har-ry, that two are bet-ter than one."

Har-ry rub-bed his face and said—

"Well, I sup-pose they are, though I did not at first think so. I grant that it is a great thing to have some-one to give one the balls, without hav-ing to stoop down and pick them up for one-self."

J. G.

New Place, Kairatabad, Hyderabad, Deccan.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have been wishing to write to you for a long time, but could think of nothing nice to write about. Now I have thought of telling you about a funny sight we saw in Hyderabad one day when we were going for a drive in our little "dumney" (two-wheeled cart, drawn by a pair of bullocks). We had gone a long way without seeing anything in particular, when we suddenly heard a loud noise of tom-toms and other queer native musical instruments. We were very curious to know what it meant, so we ordered our driver to go slowly, and after a little we saw a crowd of people headed by the men with the tom-toms, etc. As it passed us we were very much surprised to see nothing in its midst but some very big dogs of different kinds. These, we were still more surprised to hear, belonged to the Nizam (the ruler of the province), and were being taken out for their usual evening walk. Poor dogs! I am sure they must like staying at home much better than going out like this. Don't you think so?

MILLICENT E. WRAY (Aged 13).

Carskeoch, Patna, Ayrshire.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I think you would like to hear about a very curious thing that happened a short time ago. As father was walking along by the side of a flower border close to the drawing-room window, he found a hole, and put his stick down to see what was in it. He was astonished to find, on examining it, five little rabbits. Poor little things, they had all been drowned by a sparrow building its nest above the hole and stopping the pipe, so that the water overflowed and ran into the hole, and drowned the little ones.

NELLIE HOWATSON (Aged 10).

Castleton, The Meads, Eastbourne.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Some time ago my grandmother had a cat which was quite as faithful and sensible as a dog might be. Every morning, at exactly the same time, it would go upstairs and mew at her door until she let it in. When it was inside the room, it would wait for her to put something of her own on the floor for it to lie upon. It would then calmly go to sleep until she was ready to go downstairs, when it would accompany her to the breakfast-room. If what she put down belonged to anybody else, it would not lie upon it. Sometimes it would bring a mouse or a mole that it had caught in the fields and lay it at her feet, at the same time looking up into her face as if to say, "See what a good cat I have been." Of course it always received pats and caresses, which it seemed very much delighted with. We have taken LITTLE FOLKS in now for four years. I like the two serial stories, "A Pair of Pickles" and "Captured by Indians," very much.

ETHEL JOHNSON (Aged 16).

Melbury Rectory, near Shaftesbury, Dorset.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I will tell you what my little brother found some time since. We were all in the garden when he came running up to us with a bird's nest in his hand. Inside this we found a needle, threaded on some white cotton. The mother bird had evidently found the cotton, and thought it would help to line her nest.

GRACE L. CARVER (Aged 11½).

The Vicarage, Aberystwyth.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—My grandfather had a black retriever dog named "Lion." It was the largest retriever dog I have ever seen. Though large, he was not fierce or savage, except to beggars. When we were quite small, we used to have rides on his back; and he did not like it, but never tried to throw us off or hurt us. One day he was seen to come in through the gate leading out from the road, and following him a poor, miserable, half-starved dog. Lion walked on till he came to the yard. Standing in the yard was a plate with his dinner on. He walked up to the plate, and then stood aside and let the poor dog eat his dinner. The dinner finished, he led the dog out again into the road. Was he not a generous, unselfish dog? In July, 1889, he died, and was buried in the garden, and grandfather has had a stone put up with—

"Lion,"
A Faithful Friend,
Died July 10th, 1889.

He died of old age very suddenly. Mother had a dog too, and when I have time I will write about him too. We have two dogs; they are clever, but not so clever as Lion was. My favourite stories in LITTLE FOLKS are "A Pair of Pickles," "Nobody's House," and most of all "Little Mother Bunch."

PEGGY PROTHEROE (Aged 13).

Brook House, Alton, Hants.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I thought the readers of LITTLE FOLKS would like to know about two little hares my mother brought up when they were quite babies. One of them got out in our garden. When my mother had gone to bed my father was in the morning-room. After a little time he heard a scratching at the garden door. He went to see what it was, and when he opened the door in walked the little hare. Was not this clever of him?

DOROTHY M. HALL (Aged 11).

Grendon Hall, near Northampton.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I am going to tell you all about the place we live at; it is a very nice place. The other day we went over a castle at Castle Ashby, a little way from here. There was a bedroom, called the "State Room," which William III. slept in when he visited Castle Ashby. Then we went to see the gardens, which were very pretty. The Marquess of Northampton lives there. There is a little avenue in the Marquess of Northampton's grounds which is called Knuckle-bone Spinney; there is a summer-house in it, and the floor is made of sheep's knuckle-bones. We have a very nice little pony on which we ride; we call him "Paul." He is very quiet, and we go hunting on him; but now my brother is away, and has taken him with him. We hope he will soon come home, because now we cannot go for rides. I like LITTLE FOLKS very much. I think "A Pair of Pickles" and "Captured by Indians" are very nice.

MARGARET BLETSOE (Aged 12).

Stone House, Broadstairs.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have taken in LITTLE FOLKS for a year, and think it is a delightful magazine. I have not many pets, though I am very fond of animals; I have a pair of white bantams—they are quite young, and the hen has not begun to lay yet. We have two horses: they are my favourite animals, one is white and the other a dark chestnut. Then we have a dear old dog called Gyp; he is most affectionate and gentle. I had a little kitten, but it died. I am very fond of riding; my brother and I have splendid rides in the holidays. I go to a day-school and like it very much, but unfortunately I have been ill, and so I shall be behind the others.

FAITH N. STONE (Aged 13).

The Lymes, Hawkhurst, Kent.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have often heard of birds throwing a weakly little one out of the nest to kill it, but I have never heard of dormice destroying a weakly young one, and the following is a strange instance, which I think will interest some little folk. We have a pair of dormice, and on going to their cage one day we found five little ones, one of which appeared weaker and smaller than the rest. The parents seemed to wish to get rid of this one,

for several days after we found the fore part of its body firmly fixed in the hole of an empty nutshell. With great difficulty my father took the poor little thing out, and it seemed to be none the worse for its adventure. The other mice began after a time to grow their hair, and their eyes began to open; but Tiddlywinks, as we called the mite, did not thrive so well, and again he was found put in a nut. He was extricated with more difficulty than before, and being anxious about him, we all went to see how he was next morning. Nowhere could he be found in the bed of moss, but at last I saw him in the sitting-room, outside the bed-room door. He was barely alive, but still kicking, so my father thought it kinder to have him killed, and carried him off to his fate.

HILDA SWINEY (Aged 16).

11, Carter Gate, Newark, Notts.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have two hedgehogs; they are getting quite tame now. I have had them nearly a month. We have often tried to keep them before, but have never been able to, as they always died or were lost in the garden. Indeed, it is useless, unless you watch them continually, to let them out at all. We have two guinea-pigs and a Japanese waltzing-mouse, which is very amusing to watch, and I call it Chin-Chin. I like LITTLE FOLKS very much. SIDNEY BLAGG (Aged 10½.)

48, Studley Road, Clapham.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Here is a true story about my pet cat. I am learning to play the violin, and when I am practising, if she is in the room, she becomes very distracted, and wanders about crying. This continues for some time until, getting bolder, she makes a spring at my legs, and would bite me severely if I did not quickly banish her from my presence. I have been learning for two years, and she has always been the same. Can it be that the high notes jar on her nerves? My sister says that it is my bad playing; but I do not think so. EMILY WINGFIELD (Aged 13¾).

Holbrook, Surbiton Hill Park, Surbiton.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Some months since a large party of us went on the river; when we got as far as Hampton Court we stopped to bale out the boat. On the bank were a lot of geese, and two of them were trying to swallow bits of cork. One had got a cork out of a bottle, and the other had got one a good deal larger. When the goose that had the smaller cork got it between its beak and was trying to swallow it, it always dropped it, and at last left off after several attempts. JOSEPHINE E. COLE (Aged 11½).

NOTE.—Each Letter sent to the Editor must be Certified by a Parent, Teacher, or some other responsible person, as being both *True and Original* as regards all the facts that are described.

PRIZE STORY COMPETITION FOR DECEMBER.

IN the place of a "Picture Page Wanting Words," the usual Monthly Prizes, consisting of THREE ILLUSTRATED BOOKS, of the value of HALF-A-GUINEA each, are offered for the BEST ORIGINAL STORIES on the subject of "A CHRISTMAS PRESENT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES"—namely, One Book for the Best Story that is sent by Readers *of the ages of* 14, 15, *and* 16; one for the Best Story sent by Readers *of the ages of* 10, 11, 12, *and* 13; and one for the Best Story sent by Readers *under the age of Ten.* No Story must exceed 500 words in length, and each must be certified as *the original and unaided* work of the Competitor by a Parent, Minister, Teacher, or other person of responsible position, and must reach the Editor on or before the 4th of January, 1892 (the 11th of January for Competitors residing on the Continent, in the English Colonies, or any other places abroad). In addition to the THREE PRIZES and OFFICERS' MEDALS, some of the most deserving Competitors will be included in a SPECIAL LIST OF HONOUR, and will be awarded MEMBERS' MEDALS of the LITTLE FOLKS Legion of Honour. It is requested that each envelope containing a Story should have the words "December Prize Story Competition" written on the left-hand top corner of it, and be addressed to "*The Editor of* LITTLE FOLKS, *La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.*" Competitors are referred to a special notice respecting the Silver Medal, printed on page 143 of the last Volume.

ANSWERS TO OUR LITTLE FOLKS' OWN PUZZLES (*p.* 357).

MISSING LETTER PUZZLE.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

MENTAL HISTORICAL SCENE.

Clovis King of France fighting against the Germans at the battle of Tolbiac.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

DANDELION.

Din. Lead. Ned. Lid. Aid.

CHARADES.

MILLSTONE. PINCUSHION.

BURIED NAMES OF RIVERS.

Dee. Tees. Witham. Nen. Ouse.

HIDDEN PROVERBS.

1. "Ill weeds grow apace."
2. "A rolling stone gathers no moss."

WORD SQUARE.

CAT. APE. TEA.

DOUBLE VERB ACROSTIC.

SELECT—DEFEND.

1. Sai**D**. 2. Elevat**E**. 3. Loa**F**.
4. Excus**E**. 5. Contai**N**. 6. Trea**D**.

SCOTTISH TOWNS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

Peterhead. Stonehaven. Motherwell. Carstairs. Stirling.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A. BU**N**. BE**S** SY. BUS**T** ARD.
AUST R ALIA. SAM **A** RIA.
ME**L**ON. RI**M**. **A**.

RIDDLE-ME-REE.

China. Italy. Spain.

SINGLE ACROSTIC.

COLUMBUS.

Cat. **O**range. **L**incolnshire. **U**nite.
Mary. **B**eak. **U**rn. **S**hilling.

METAGRAM.

Cable. Fable. Gable. Sable. Table.

BURIED NAMES OF GIRLS.

1. Helen. 2. Edith. 3. Ida. 4. Olive. 5. Ruth. 6. Pansy.

GEOGRAPHICAL ARITHMOREM.—GARONNE.

Gambia. **A**mur. **R**ibble. **O**rwell.
Nile. **N**eckar. **E**lbe.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.

WATERFALL.

Raft. Well. Awl. Trawl. Leaf.

TO MY READERS.

THERE will be very few of you, I hope, who will say that you are dissatisfied with the New Volume of LITTLE FOLKS which begins next month. First of all, you will each receive a

SPECIAL NEW YEAR'S GIFT

with the JANUARY NUMBER, consisting of "THE 'LITTLE FOLKS' BIRTHDAY ALBUM FOR 1892." This is to be illustrated with Twelve Full-page Engravings from designs by the late ALICE HAVERS, and will contain a suitable motto for every day in the year, as well as spaces for recording the birthdays of relations and friends, or inserting their autographs.

Then—as I am sure you will be pleased to hear—there is to be

A NEW SERIAL STORY BY MRS. MOLESWORTH,

Author of "Little Mother Bunch," "Carrots," "The Palace in the Garden," &c., entitled "THE NEXT DOOR HOUSE," and this—illustrated every month—will be continued through the Volume.

The SECOND SERIAL, named

"THROUGH SNOW AND SUNSHINE," has been written by HENRY FRITH, with whose other stories, "The Secret of the Silver Lake," "Toddlekins' Fortunes," &c. &c., many of you are familiar; and this also will be illustrated every month.

In a series of articles called

"LITTLE PEEPS INTO BUSY PLACES," you will be told of what goes on every day in a few well-known places in and near London, such as The Central Telegraph Office, The Royal Observatory, The Bank of England, &c.

"AUNT POLLIE'S PARTIES; or, HOW FOUR BUSY B's AMUSED THEIR FRIENDS," will be some Chats in which practical hints will be given by MAGGIE BROWNE as to how young people may entertain each other by Drawing-Room Plays, Waxwork Performances, and Games for Indoors and Out; while in

"SOME WONDERS OF TO-DAY," stories are to be related of recent triumphs of engineering skill. Among the subjects dealt with will be "The Longest Tunnel in England," "The Tower Bridge," "The Manchester Ship Canal," &c. &c.

"CON'S ADVENTURES IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY" is to be the story of a lad who lost his way one night and saw many wonderful sights in the famous Abbey—written and illustrated by EDITH EVELYN; and

"IN THE WORLD'S GARDEN" is the name of MAGGIE SYMINGTON'S new series of Chats for "OUR SUNDAY AFTERNOONS"—telling how the Garden was laid out and planted, and of the work that was done in it.

A FULL-PAGE BORDER ILLUSTRATION by GORDON BROWNE, with appropriate verses, will appear each month; besides which the JANUARY PART will have as a frontispiece **A Picture in Several Colours**; and later on another PICTURE IN COLOURS will be given.

Numerous COMPLETE STORIES, PAPERS, and PICTURES, large and small, will be contributed by well-known Authors and Artists to the New Volume, which will as before include all the usual features, such as the "Pages for Very Little Folk," "Butterfly Ballads," "The Little Folks' Post Office," "The Editor's Pocket-Book," Music, Puzzles, &c. &c.

Finally, I have to thank you very heartily for all the various articles forwarded to me in connection with the Special Prize Competitions for 1891, to be distributed among the inmates of the various Children's Hospitals, and to say that the JANUARY NUMBER will contain a COMPLETE LIST OF PRIZE-WINNERS IN THE SPECIAL COMPETITIONS FOR 1891, together with full particulars of SEVERAL NEW SPECIAL PRIZE COMPETITIONS, open to Children of all ages, arranged for 1892.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Your very sincere friend,

THE EDITOR.

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek
MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

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